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Infant-baptism

FROM

H E A V E N,

AND NOT OF

M E N.

OR,

A moderate Discourse concerning the Baptism of the Infant-
seed of Believers.

Whereunto is prefixed,

A large introductory Preface, preparing
the Readers way to a more profitable perusal
of the ensuing Treatise.

By Joseph Whiston.

Εἰς τὸ ὕδατος βαπτίζω ὑμᾶς, ἔρχεται ὁ ὁ ἰσχυρὸς μου,
ὃ ἐκείνους ἔλαβεν ἅπαντα τὰ ἑσποδια αὐτοῦ, αὐτὸς
ὑμᾶς β-πτίσει ἐν πνεύματι ὁσίῳ καὶ ᾠγίῳ, Luk. 3. 16

L O N D O N,

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THE
P R E F A C E
TO THE
R E A D E R

Christian Reader,

IT is an old and true saying, *Veritas non querit Angulos*, Truth is neither afraid nor ashamed to be seen, though thereby she be exposed to the severest and most critical tryals and examinations of men, neither is she at all desirous to appear in such a dress, as that thereby she may insinuate her self into the affections of men for this end, that through their interest in, and byassing influence upon the understanding, it may be bribed to a partiality on her side; her evidence and power is such, as makes that needless, *Magna est & prevaleb't*: In the ensuing Treatise thou hast a Doctrine and practice maintained, which, I doubt not, will be owned by our Lord Jesus Christ in the day of his appearing, to be part of that Faith once delivered to the Saints, for

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which it is his will they should earnestly contend; which Doctrine and practice, as I have endeavoured to present to thy view, in the sole light of Divine evidence, rationally deduced from that great Luminary of the Scriptures, without immixing any thing of humane Eloquence, for the bribing the understanding by subtle insinuations upon thy affections, (a course, which as my natural Genius leads me not unto, so my indigency, as to abilities, prohibits my attempting of) so the forestalling thy Judgment, by any subtle artifices of one kind or another, is none of my design in the present Preface. There are only three things, I conceive necessary to be done, to prepare the Readers way to a more profitable perusal of the Discourse here tendered to him.

First, That I should endeavour to remove, at least allay, that prejudice that may possibly arise in the minds of some against it, as coming abroad at such a time as this is, whereby they might be kept from that due perusal and through examination and weighing of what is here tendred to them, as is necessary, in order to their reaping that benefit designed to them by it; and thus, though there are several prejudices may possibly arise in the minds of men, according to their previous perswasions, relating to the practice here pleaded for, yet I shall only take notice of that, which may arise from the seeming unseasonableness, of sending forth a Discourse of this nature at such a time as this is,

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is, and as affairs now stand with the parties, between whom this controversie hath of late years been more especially agitated, possibly thou mayst think the Author rather deserves a Censure of, at least, indiscretion, than the Discourse it self a serious perusal and examination.

And it cannot be denied, but that an undertaking of this nature, at such a time, doth carry, and that in several respects, a very great shew of unseasonableness in it, and had not the sense and apprehension of the present state of affairs detained me under an irresolution as to its publication, this Discourse might have seen the light much sooner than now it doth; and yet had I not had the approbation of those, whose Judgments I had reason to attend unto, it had not now, no nor ever, for ought I know, appeared in so publick a way as now it doth: But seeing it is thus come abroad, let me in brief give the Reader an account of the ground of my proceedings herein: Yet I conceive it unnecessary, to trouble the Reader with an account of the several occasions, through which my thoughts came at first so to be engaged, and after to be carried on in a more thorough search into this Controversie; I shall only give him an account of the ground of my sending abroad this Discourse (wherein he will find the result of that search I have made) at this time. And in general take it thus:

Upon further and more serious advisements with my self, and consultations with others,

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I could not conceive, how the sending of it abroad, though at such a time, should be justly accounted so unseasonable, as upon the first view it may, and for a while to me it did seem to be. When the practice here pleaded for, by the unanimous consent of all parties, lyes from among the Fundamentals of Christian Religion, and consequently, supposing the worst, it should at last be found to be unscriptural; the contrary whereunto I am most confident of (whether groundless or no, let the intelligent and impartial Reader judge) yet the conscientious imbracement of it cannot be destructive to the Souls of men, when nothing is brought to light, beyond what was of publick and general cognizance before, when the judgment and practice of the contrary minded is no way concerned in the sufferings they are subject or liable to, and consequently, the detection of their error cannot be rationally supposed to further their sufferings, when no new Controversie is started, and consequently, no new rents or divisions like to be made, beyond what have been of so long continuance; how the appearing in publick of such a Discourse upon this Subject should at this time, or any other time, be accounted much unseasonable, I could give no rational account, either to my self or to others: As for the manner of handling it, I am not conscious to my self of having given any just cause of offence unto any; what thou wilt meet with here, is argumentative, not invective, aiming at thy information and confirmation, in what I verily
judge

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judge to be the Truth, not thy prejudice either in temporals or spirituals: In a word, unless the naked proposal of my own perswasion, relating to the Controverſie here debated, with the Scripture evidence, captivating my understanding into that perswasion, can be grievous or offensive unto any, I cannot conceive how the ensuing Discourse can be.

But it may be it may be said, There is yet a double inconvenience, or a twofold ill consequence may arise from the publication of a Discourse of this nature at such a time.

First, The minds of Christians will be in danger to be diverted from what is more properly their work, and about which they ought more especially to be taken up.

To that I answer, I wish the ensuing Papers may find the minds of Christians so well employed, as that such a diversion would be indeed prejudicial to them; but be it so, as in respect of some, I hope, it may be, yet the exercise of a little prudence will prevent that inconvenience; and let me here caution the Reader to take heed, that he do not by this, or any other Controverſie, divert his mind from the more weighty concernments of his Soul; take heed thou do not so apply thy mind to, nor suffer thy thoughts to be taken up with any matters of controverſie, as to neglect thy growth in Grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, but, I say, a little Christian prudence will direct in this, and obviate the inconvenience suggested.

But

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But secondly, It will be said, The appearing thus in publick may occasion the revival of these Controversies, which seem now almost laid aside and forgotten among the People of God, and consequently may renew, heighten and increase those divisions, which heretofore have been of such sad consequence, as to their unanimous and concordant practice of the main things of Religion.

To this I shall answer, I am not altogether without hope of the quite contrary, *viz.* That it may be of some use for the obtaining and promoting union among them,

There is a double union that the People of God are to labour after.

First, An union of judgment and practice, that they may think, speak, and do the same things.

Secondly, An union in heart and affection, that wherein they do differ in judgment and practice, they may bear with, and forbear one another in love.

Now what means can have a more direct tendency, or be more effectual (will the Lord please to concur with his blessing) for the obtaining and promoting either of these kinds of union, than the holding forth with a Spirit of meekness what light is received from the Scriptures, about the things, wherein the difference and disagreement is?

As for the former, 'tis utterly impossible ever to be attained among those, who dare not, as we use to say, pin their faith upon other mens sleeves,

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sleeves, or practice hand over head, whatever is proposed to them, by any means exclusive of this; and with what confidence soever any attempts may be made to effect this union any other way, they will be found utterly unavailable, and probably issue in the quite contrary event to what is aimed at.

But suppose this first and most excellent kind of union, which we ought ultimately to aim at and endeavour, should not be attained, the same differences in judgment and practice should yet remain, yet methinks I may, yea, I cannot but rationally expect, that the latter, *viz.* of heart and affection, will be so far from being impeded and obstructed, that it will be considerably advanced and promoted, though dissenters may not come over to my judgment and practice by what is here offered, yet sure I may promise my self, without concurring the censure of being over confident of the Truth asserted, or the strength and validity of the Arguments produced for its confirmation, that it will be granted that in case I do err, it is *cum ratione*, and that I have so much ground from Scripture to bottom my judgment and practice upon, as may acquit me, in the judgment of Charity, without stretching it beyond the bounds allowed in Scripture and warranted by Reason, from a wilful persisting in error; and I hardly know any thing more effectual for the maintaining love and friendship among dissenting Christians, then for them to be mutually satisfied in each other, that they do not dissent upon any other account then their
respective

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respective conscientiousness of their duty towards God, which satisfaction can hardly be given in a more effectual manner, than by holding forth and declaring each to other the light they have received from the Scriptures of truth, captivating their judgments to the imbracement and practice of what they do differently imbrace and practice; so that I cannot but hope the sending abroad the ensuing Discourse, will be so far from reviving a Controversie, almost laid asleep and forgotten, to the disuniting of Christians, and heightening their differences and divisions, that it may be of some good use for the promoting the quite contrary end, *viz*, their uniting, if not in judgment, that they may be as the Apostle speaks, 1 Cor. I. 10. *καταπισμένοι ἐν τῷ αὐτῷ νοῦ, καὶ ἐν τῇ αὐτῇ γνώμῃ*; *Perfectly joyned together in one mind and judgment*; yet they may live together, *ἀντεχομένοι ἀλλήλους ἐν ἀγάπῃ*, Ephes. 4. 2. *For bearing one another in love*: And yet further let me add one thing more, which having its due consideration, may, if not wholly remove, yet much allay what prejudices of this nature may arise in the minds of men, and it is this; Times of afflictions, whether coming immediately from the hand of God, or mediately from the hand of man, are special times for every one to take a more through and impartial review of their respective wayes and practises, the Rod hath a voice which all are commanded to heare; *Hear the Rod, and who hath appointed it*, Micah 6 9. What its voice is, or what it calls for at our hands, may be gathered partly

partly from what the God of Wisdom, or the only wise God declares to be his expectation, from those either over whom it is lift up in the threatning, or upon whom it is laid in the execution, and partly from what the men of wisdom, as the Prophet there speaks, have done in answer to this voice, what are Gods expectations he tells us, *Jer. 8. 6. I saith the Lord hearkened and heard, but no man spake aright; and wherein they failed in speaking aright he tells us, no man said, what have I done, or which is of the same importance, what have I not done, what have I omitted and neglected that I ought to have done; the Rod calls to us to call our selves to an impartial account, wherein we have either come short of, or exceeded that Rule we ought to walk by, what men of wisdom have done in answer to this voice of the Rod, see in that Lam. 3. 40. Let us search our ways and turn unto the Lord; when God is searching after our sins, especially when the search is made by afflictions, when God hath us upon the rack, as Job seems to allude, Job 10. 6. sure it is our concernment to make a through and impartial search too: God threatens to search Jerusalem with Candles, Zeph. 1. 12. it is meant of his searching by afflictions: now God seems to have his Candle in his hand, he is searching England with Candles, he is in special searching the professing party in England with Candles; now it is an excellent observation of that worthy Expositor upon Job, saith he, Troubles are as so many Candles that God setteth up to search*

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us by, and they will be as so many fires inkindled to consume us with, in case we search not ourselves; but yet let me say, it is not the bare light of afflictions, without the concurring light of the Word and Spirit, that can discover to any their sin; hence when God holds out the light of his Candle, it must needs be a very seasonable time to hold forth the light of the Word, which being attended with the internal illumination of the Spirit, may discover that to be a sin, which would not be owned so to be at another time; from what hath been said, I cannot but hope, that what is here presented to publick view, will by considerate persons be so far from being accounted unseasonable, that it will be accounted in some sort the more especially seasonable at such a time as this. But suppose, notwithstanding what hath been said, the sending abroad of these Papers at this time, should by any be judged unseasonable, I have three things yet further to offer for my vindication.

First, I considered, that for the Mind to hang in suspense, and lye under the pressure of fluctuating uncertainties about the mind and will of Christ relating to the discharge of duty, is at any time grievous, but more especially when the hand of God is lift up, and that I know is the case of some truly conscientious Christians, in reference to the practice here pleaded for, and I judged it my duty to yield unto them what relief my mean ability would reach unto.

Secondly,

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Secondly, I considered that saying of the Wise man, *He that observeth the Wind shall not sow, and he that regardeth the Clouds shall not reap*, Eccles. 11. 4. And whether I might live to see a more seasonable time was altogether uncertain unto me; and for me to observe the Wind, and stand gazing on the Clouds, till overtaken by the night of death, where no man can work, and laid to sleep in the dust, and thereby have lost my season for the sowing the Seed, that Seed, of which I may and must say it is, *Messias* as that word, *Psal. 126. 6.* is rendered by *Junius* and some others, it is, *Semen acquisitum, Semen aliunde comparatum*, Seed that I have through Grace obtained from anothers store, I hope I may truly say from his, who, as the Apostle saith, *Ministers seed to the sower, and bread to the eater*; and that to use the Author aforementioned his words, *Prece & pretio*, yet not so much of Silver and Gold, as of that, which by the Testimony of the Holy Ghost himself is the issue of much study, viz. weariness, and I may add, wearing away of the flesh; I was saying, should I have observed the Winds, and stood gazing on the Clouds, till lost my season to sow this same Seed contained in the ensuing Treatise, I could not have expected to reap when the Harvest comes, what now through Grace I can in some measure live in the comfortable expectations of, seasons lost, though something unseasonable prove a loss to the Husbandman when the harvest comes.

Thirdly,

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Thirdly, The sending forth these Papers was necessary to prepare a way to, and lay a foundation for a few practical sheets, which, if the Lord vouchsafe life and opportunity, may follow, wherein I intend, as the Lord shall assist, to make a more full enquiry into these four things.

First, What are the Reasons of Gods appointing the application of the Token of the Covenant to the Infant seed of his people.

Secondly, What are the benefits and advantages arising to them thereby,

Thirdly, What is the duty of Parents towards their Children, as incorporated by Baptism into the Mystical Body of Christ, as visible.

And fourthly, What is the improvement that Children themselves may and ought to make of their Baptism, applyed unto them in their infancy, as they grow up to years of maturity which things I could not fitly speak unto before their Covenant-interest and right to the Sign and Token of the Covenant arising therefrom was proved; so that the appearing thus in publick, in the defence of the practice of Infant-baptism, was in some sort necessary unto me.

Secondly, Another thing I conceive necessary for the preparing the Readers way to a more profitable perusal of the ensuing Treatise, is, to make some enquiries, what may have had, and still hath too great an interest in the so far prevailing

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vailing of the judgment and practice of lying opposite to that here pleaded for; 'tis, I confess, something strange to me, whence it should come to pass, that so many, and those, at least many of them, truly conscientious Christians, should at so easie a rate part with, and give up their Childrens priviledge, as to interest in the Covenant, and the Token thereof, and so readily take up an opinion and practice divesting them thereof. •

Three things have often occurred to my thoughts, as rendring this matter of wonder unto me.

First, The plain evidence, as to my understanding, given in by the Scriptures to that their priviledge.

Secondly, The utter silence of the Scriptures, as to any express, yea, or plainly deduced consequential denial of it to them.

Thirdly, That tenderness of affection natural (and sure Grace destroys not Nature) to Parents towards their Children.

Hence notwithstanding what is urged on their parts from the Scripture, yet I cannot but conceive there is either something wholly excentric to the Question it self, or some irregularity in the management of their enquiries, in reference thereunto, that hath had, and still hath a considerable interest, at least, in manyes rejection of the Truth pleaded for, and their embracing the opinion and practice opposite thereunto.

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Now it may not be altogether unprofitable to make some inquiry what that should be, that so the Reader being forewarned may disintangle himself, and have his mind more free to attend to, and impartially weigh what is here tendered to him; and upon a serious enquiry, I conceive, these six things may be assigned, as of the importance mentioned,

First, I cannot but think it must in part be imputed to a want of that tenderness of affection towards Relations, attended with the want of a right apprehension and true sense of the worth and excellency of spiritual Blessings, and Covenant-priviledges that Christians ought to labour after; the Apostle mentions it as one of the evils of the last times, That men shall be without natural affection.

Now though this evil prevail not in the hearts of truly gracious Souls to a predominancy, as it may and doth in the hearts of such, who have only a form of Godliness; yet it is too usually found, that truly gracious Souls are more or less corrupted by the Epidemical evils of the times and places where they live, in infectious times their blood and humors may be vitiated and corrupted, to the producing of some evil symptomes, upon whom yet the infection prevails not, to the breaking out into a Disease; to the taking away of their lives. Thus I cannot but think that this evil, of the want of natural affections, too far prevails in, though it prevails not over truly gracious Souls, to the giving a very great advantage to the so far spreading

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spreading of the opinion and practice aforementioned ; yet I do not say , neither would I be understood, as though I did suppose that this same evil hath been , or is the cause or occasion of all their rejection of the practice pleaded for, and complying with the opposite opinion and practice, who yet do reject the one and imbrace the other : I do not doubt, but there are many among the contrary minded, who are persons of much tenderness of affection towards their Children, and have in a good measure a right apprehension and due sense of the worth and excellency of spiritual Blessings and Covenant-priviledges ; nor yet would I be understood, as though I did suppose that this evil were only to be found among the persons we now speak of, no, I fear the same evil prevails too far in many of those, who yet imbrace, yea, stand up in the defence of the practice of Infant-baptism, and though it doth not appear the same way, yet other wayes it doth ; Instances evidencing this are too obvious than here to need a recital , the Disease is Epidemical, though appearing in some one way, and in others another way ; but this I say ; I do verily judge , that the so universal prevailing of this same evil, in this latter Age of the World will be found to have been one thing giving rise to, and furthering the success of the opinion & practice here opposed ; let but Parents get a due tenderness of affection towards their Children, and a right apprehension and due sense of the worth and excellency of spiritual priviledges , and their minds will be much disposed

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to an impartial weighing what is offered on the behalf of this practice of Infant-baptism.

I am aware it will be retorted by my Opposers, That it is a fond, foolish and irregular affection towards Children, that hath bribed our understanding, and byassed us to a perswasion, that the Scripture holds forth some benefit or privilege to them beyond what indeed it doth, our mistakes arise from the byassing influences that these affections have upon our understandings and judgments.

But to this I shall only say, That it is not altogether unworthy our Observation, that Providence should call forth such to appear in defence of this practice,

Mr. Baxter, Mr. Cooke,
when they wrote,
and my self at present
being Batchelors.

who cannot be rationally supposed to have lain under the byass of any such irregular affections; and as for others, who, it is true, might more rationally be supposed to lye under the force of such a byass, yet their Writings sufficiently declare, they had judgment as well as affection, and their lives and conversations evidence they had conscience as well as judgment; their Writings shew they had ability to discern truth from error, and their lives shew their affections could not byass them to practice, but according as their judgments by Scripture evidence were convinced: There is then no rational ground for any to suppose, that our imbracement of, and appearing for the practice under consideration, hath been, or is from
any

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any such irregular workings of affection as is suggested; the danger lyes on the other hand: If then we would understand the mind of Christ, in reference to this practice here contended for, labour to get a due tenderness of affection towards Children, with a right apprehension and due sense of the worth and excellency of spiritual priviledges: a due and a regular working of the affections towards any good tendered in the Covenant of Grace, hath a special subserviency to our receiving of light from God through the Scriptures, in and about his will concerning our duty relating to our enjoyment of that good.

Secondly, That which hath contributed not a little to the giving rise to, and furthering the prevailing of the opinion and practice here opposed, hath been and is the confounding some either supposed or real irregularities in or attending the administration of Baptism to Infants, with the practice it self, to mention these two things.

First, The manner of its administration.

Secondly, The Subjects it hath been and frequently is administered unto.

For the first, How oft is it found, that persons of weaker judgments are prevailed with to reject the practice of Infant-baptism it self, by a specious Argument that yet only lyes against the way and manner of its administration among those, who hold and maintain that practice; hence it may be observed, how that way and manner is pitched upon and pleaded
a 3 against,

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against, that to the outward appearance seems, and is supposed by the persons making use of this plea, to have the least countenance from Scripture; and thus the way and manner pitched upon is, that of sprinkling, which way and manner of administration, though disused by many, if not generally by all, that with the greatest strength of Scripture Arguments have asserted the practice it self; yet is urged by the contrary minded, as though the only way and manner of its administration among the *Pedobaptists*; hence are those frequent invectives against Infant-sprinkling scattered up and down in the Writings, and too common in the mouths of our Opposers; and for the latter, how apt are people, being told and perswaded, that themselves or others, as the Seed of unbelieving Parents, had no right to Baptism, to be induced to believe, that no Infants, let the Parents be what they will, have any better right than themselves or others, born of such Parents, had; and hence perceiving the undueness of their own Baptism in their infancy, are easily brought to believe the undueness of the Baptism of Infants in the general: And it is true, there are some other things (the irregularity of which as I shall not deny, so their refutation comes not within the compass of my present business) appertaining to the administration of Baptism to Infants, as by some it is administered, that give a like advantage to the success of the opinion and practice here opposed.

But

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But now whether the Infant-Seed of believing Parents ought to be baptized, is one Question.

How or after what manner they ought to be baptized is another.

What Parents may be reputed to be Believers, so as that their Infant-Seed may upon their account be baptized, is a third.

Now it is the first of these Questions only, that is discussed in the ensuing Treatise; neither is it at all necessary, that either of the two latter should be taken notice of, or touched upon, in order to the finding out the mind and will of Christ relating unto this: Errors and irregularities, supposing them to be really so, in or attending the administration of Baptism, ought to be reformed, and not pleaded against the practise it self: All therefore that I shall say to this is, let none confound what ought to be distinctly considered; labour first to find out the mind of Christ, as to the practise it self, as abstractly considered, without consideration had to those various Questions, the determination of which is of no use at all for the right determination of this; and having found out the mind of Christ relating to this first Question, then the consideration of the other will be more proper and seasonable; the right methodizing of things highly conduceth to a right understanding the mind of Christ, respective to our duty, when the confounding or jumbling things together, that are of a distinct consideration, subjects to great mistakes.

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Thirdly, That which hath had, and hath a considerable interest in the giving rise to, and furthering the success of the opinion and practise here opposed, is the taking up particular Instances and Examples of persons baptized, in the primitive times, upon their personal profession of Faith and Repentance, without regard had to the case and condition of the persons so baptized, antecedent to their Baptism, and consequently without considering the true reason and ground of their Baptisme at that age, and upon such a profession and taking them as a full explication of that Commission of Christ, warranting the application of Baptism, under the new Testament administration, as well negative, shewing who ought not to be baptized, as positive, shewing who ought to be baptized. And hence two things are inferred and concluded.

First, That a solemn profession of Faith and Repentance ought to precede the application of Baptism.

Secondly, That none ought to be baptized but upon the precedency of such a profession.

But now let the cases and conditions of the persons, whose examples are produced, be considered, and let the true reason and ground of their Baptism at such an age, and upon such a profession, be inquired into: and thus we shall find, that the persons we are now speaking of, were either such as were Members of the Jewish Church, as the natural Jews, and Gentile Profelites,

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lites, or else they were such, who were converted from among the Gentiles. As for the case of the Gentiles, the reason and ground of their Baptism at such an age, and upon such a profession, is obvious to all, and when any are still converted from among the Heathens, and brought over to the imbracement of Christianity, 'tis readily granted they are to be baptized according to the Instances produced; but from thence it cannot with any shew of reason be concluded, that such a profession must universally antecede the application of Baptism; and as for the case of the Jews and Profelytes, who before were Members of the Church, and answerably had no need of any new admission into it, the Church still remaining one and the same, the case and condition of none, since the desolution of the Jewish Ecclesiastical Polity can possibly be imagined to answer thereunto, or correspond therewith, and therefore the Instances produced, either of Jews or Gentile Profelytes being baptized at age, upon their personal profession of Faith and Repentance, ought not to be made the pattern of Baptism, as administered to or among the Gentiles; neither can any such alteration in the Subjects, receptive of the Sign and Token of the Covenant, be concluded from these Instances as is pretended; the reason of their Baptism, upon their personal profession, was, not because under the new Testament administration such a profession is constantly and universally to antecede the application of Baptism. But the Reason was evidently twofold. First,

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First, Because now a new Sign and Token of the Covenant was instituted and appointed by Christ, which *Abraham's Seed*, in their Generations, were under an Obligation, by vertue of that first Command, to keep; and hence, as during the continuance of the first Token, *viz.* Circumcision, they were, as, to be incorporated into the Church, or visible Body of Christ, under an Obligation to receive and bear that; so upon the institution of a new Token, *viz.* Baptism, they were still, supposing the continuance of their Membership in the Church, obliged to receive and bear that; and hence, though they were duly admitted into the mystical Body of Christ, by Circumcision applyed to them in their infancy, and had no need of another admission, yet when another Sign or Token was appointed, though by the cessation of Circumcision, their Membership in the Church was not nulled or broken off, yet it was necessary they should receive and bear that other Sign or Token now instituted by Christ, and that, that they might continue their obedience to that first Command, to keep the Covenant.

Secondly, Because the continuance of their Membership did indispensably require as a reformation in their judgments and practises, which was to be begun in Repentance, so they were to believe a new Article of Faith, *viz.* *That that individual Person, the Man Christ Jesus, was the Son of God, the promised Messiah and Saviour of the World;* which Repentance and

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and Faith were visibly to be professed, in order to their visible continuance in the Church or mystical Body of Christ; hence it was, that antecedent to their Baptism, the new Token of the Covenant, they were to make that profession of their Faith and Repentance, from whence it appears, that their Baptism upon their personal profession of Faith and Repentance, neither concludes themselves antecedently not to be Members of the same Church, or mystical Body of Christ, that Baptism admits into, nor yet that a visible profession is indispensably necessary, antecedent to the application of Baptism.

Secondly, The other thing inferred from the forementioned Instances and Examples, and which follows upon this, is, That none ought to be baptized, but such as are capable of making such a Profession: but now it will not follow; that because some Instances are left upon record, of persons being baptized at age upon their personal Faith and Repentance, that therefore none may be baptized but upon such a profession; these Instances shew us what we may and ought to do, when a suitable case occurs, but declare not what we ought to do, when cases are no way parallel, hence though we have no express mention made of the Baptism of Infants, *in totidem verbis*, yet having sufficient discoveries of the mind of Christ as to that matter, the want of such express mention ought to be no let in our way, as to the application of Baptism unto them; therefore if we would come to the knowledge

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knowledge of the will of Christ, relating to the practice under debate, take heed we do not stumble at this stone, do not take up with the bare Instances and Examples of persons baptized in primitive times, as though the full explication; both negative and positive, of the Commission of Christ, for the administration of Baptism, were to be deduced from them, but take in and improve the whole of what Christ hath left us in his Word, whether in the Old or in the New Testament, for the finding out of his mind and will relating unto this practice: And thus, I hope, Reader, thou wilt find in the ensuing Treatise, that he hath given us sufficient discoveries of his mind and will.

Fourthly, That which hath given no little advantage to the opinion and practice here opposed is, the comparing the supposed littleness of good, and smalness of advantage accrewing to the Seed of Believers, by the utmost of what we contend for on their behalf, supposing that were granted to them, with the supposed greatness and variety of inconveniencies, and ill consequences arising from the granting of it unto them.

Hence we may observe, how our Opposers, with all their might, endeavour to diminish the good, pleaded by us to redound to the Seed of Believers, by their interest in the Covenant and Baptism, supposing the one should be granted as their privilege, and the other applied unto them; and on the other hand, aggravate and set forth the variety of evils, inconveniencies
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and disadvantages, supposed by them to follow upon the granting unto them such a Covenant-interest and application of Baptism upon the ground thereof.

But now all that I shall say to this is, as for the good benefit and advantage arising to the Infant-seed of believing Parents, from both their Covenant-state and Baptism, as applyed unto them thereupon, 'tis exceeding great, as will, I hope, through Divine assistance, be made to appear, if Providence disappoint not my present purpose: At present let this be considered, as for their Covenant-interest and state, a double benefit ariseth to them thereby.

First, They are, as distributively taken, under a Promise of God being their God, in the sence declared in the ensuing Discourse.

Secondly, They are, as collectively taken, as Members of the visible Church, under an indefinite Promise, supposing them grown to years of maturity, of being so taught of God, as savingly to know him.

How far the certainty of their future Salvation, supposing them to dye in their infancy, may be concluded from their interest in these Promises, I shall leave to the judgment of the judicious Reader: This, I doubt not, will be found true at the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, when these Secrets shall be made manifest, that vastly the Major part of the Seed of Believers, and that by vertue of these very Promises

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Promises made unto them, will be found the Heirs of that Inheritance prepared for the Saints in light; mistake me not, I do not say, the major part of the Seed of each particular Believer, but the major part of the Seed of Believers generally taken, or as taken one with another: But however methinks it should not be accounted a small matter, to be brought in any sense, though it be never so little nigher the Promises of Salvation, and into a nigher capacity and probability of injoying the good promised than the rest of mankind are in, and that they must sure be acknowledged to be, by that their Covenant-state and interest in the Promises: And as for Baptism, the good and benefit of that is hinted in the close of the insuing Discourse, and is more fully to be declared, if the Lord will: As for the evils and mischiefs, supposed to follow upon our Doctrine and practice, they are really none at all; whatever evils may be observed at any time to follow, they are only accidental, and will be found to have some other Original, and not be the natural and necessary fruits and consequences of either the Doctrine or practice of Infant-Baptism.

Fifthly, That which is of a like importance with what hath been hitherto mentioned is, peoples placing, at least, too much of their Religion in an external way, mode or form, attended with an easiness and facility to be drawn into this or that way by unsound and groundless motives and inducements; too many think, that if they are but of such a way they are

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are good Christians, and secured as to their eternal states; hence through the subtlety of Satan, and deceit of their own hearts, they overlook and neglect the main things wherein the power of Religion doth indeed consist, and betake themselves to, and fall in with this or that way, as supposing themselves thereby insured for Salvation, and wanting judgment to discern between Truth and Error, fall in with the Judgment and practice under consideration, as led thereunto meerly by some unsound and groundless motive and inducement; and though it is true, truly conscientious Christians cannot satisfy themselves in a bare way or form, neither will they be led by any motives or inducements, without any regard at all had to the Word of God; yet even in respect of many of them, especially such who are of weaker Judgments, some unsound and groundless motive and inducement hath no little interest in their embracing this or that way rather than any other; and thus the motives and inducements leading Professors into a compliance with the way, or judgment and practice, lying opposite to what we have here pleaded for, are exceeding various, all which to enumerate would render me over tedious; all that I shall say therefore is, If we would come to a right understanding of the mind and will of our Lord Christ, place Religion where it ought to be placed, and then setting all such motives and inducements aside, weigh impartially the Scriptures, and Arguments grounded thereupon, readily giving up
our

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our judgments and practices to the guidance of the light and evidence of those Scriptures and Arguments.

Sixthly and lastly, The perswasion and practice here opposed, have prevailed so far among Christians, in a great measure, through their preposterous enquiries after the will of Christ, relating to the practice here pleaded for, taken in conjunction with the products of those inquiries in and upon their own minds; and the preposterousness of their inquiries lyes more especially in these two things.

First, In their inquiring after the will of Christ as to the Baptism of Infants, before they have sought after, or found out the proper uses and ends of Baptism in the general, and the true notion under which it was instituted and commanded by Christ.

Secondly, In their inquiring after the will of Christ relating to this practice, without any precedent consideration had to his will, relating to the interest of the Infants of believing Parents in the Covenant and Promises thereof: by these preposterous inquiries men put themselves under a threefold disadvantage, as to their finding out that will of Christ they are inquiring after.

First, They terminate and limit their inquiries to the Scriptures of the new Testament, as supposing the whole will of Christ, relating unto Baptism, it being a new Testament Ordinance, must needs be contained in them.

Secondly,

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Secondly, Which follows hereupon, They search not after, nor attend unto the Tenour of the Covenant, as at first established with *Abraham* the Father of the Faithful, nor attend to the various Scriptures contained in the old Testament, opening and confirming that Tenour of the Covenant, as so established with him.

Thirdly, Which follows from both, They loose the benefit of those several Inferences that may rationally, and according to Scripture warrant, be drawn from interest in the Covenant, for the determining and concluding what is the mind and will of Christ concerning the application of Baptism.

But now would people begin their inquiries where they ought to do, and proceed regularly therein, they would find the mind and will of Christ to appear with much more clearness of evidence on the side of the practice we plead for; would they make their first inquiries after the proper uses and ends of Baptism, and the true notion under which it is instituted, and then proceed in an impartial search after the Tenour of the Covenant, and here again begin where they ought to do, viz. at the first establishment of it with *Abraham* the Father of the Faithful, and so proceed regularly, as the Covenant hath been continued, from one Generation to another, to *Abraham's* Seed, whether Natural or Mystical, still regulating their judgments about the additions, alterations and variations of the Covenant, together with the

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Sign

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Sign and Token thereof, by what the Scriptures declare of Gods proceeding therein from time to time, they would come to a more clear understanding what the will of Christ, relating to the practice under consideration is.

But when people shall look upon Baptism as abstracted from its uses and ends, and the notion under which it is commanded, and then limit and terminate their inquiries after the Subjects it is to be applyed unto, to the Scriptures of the new Testament, overlooking the whole of what God hath declared of his mind and will, touching a right to, and interest in the Covenant, throughout the old Testament, having no regard to the ground, that interest in, and right to the Covenant gives to the Sign and Token of it, 'tis no wonder though they fall under so great mistakes, especially if we consider, in the second place, the usual issue and products of these inquiries, as thus preposterously managed in and upon the minds of men; and that is a strong conceit, that because they find not in so many express words mention made of the Baptism of Infants in the new Testament, therefore undoubtedly it is not according to the mind and will of Christ, that they should be baptized; and people having their minds strongly possessed with this conceit, are easily perswaded, that they have no interest in, or right to the Covenant or Promises thereof; whereas would they but, before their minds are possessed with such a prejudicate conceit, search after the interest of the Seed of Belivers
in

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in the Covenant throughout the whole Scriptures, I doubt not, but as they would plainly discern that their interest, so they would more easily be perswaded of their right to Baptism, the present Token of the Covenant; therefore if ever we would come to a clear understanding of the mind and will of Christ, relating to the Baptism of Infants, let our inquiries after it be regular.

These things I could willingly have spoken more fully to, but the Book swelling to a bigger bulk than I had hoped it would have done, and having staid something long in the Press, these brief hints shall suffice. And therefore,

Thirdly, That the Reader especially that is less able to pass a Judgment upon an Argument, may reap the full benefit designed him by the ensuing Treatise, I shall here give him a brief Summary of what is more largely discoursed herein.

What I have adventured thus publicly to appear in the defence of, as the Reader will see in the main Proposition, laid as a foundation to the ensuing Discourse, is, the Affirmative of that so long and so much agitated Question, concerning the Baptism of Infants: and all that I have at present ingaged in the defence of is, the Affirmative of that Question, as it respects the Infant seed of Believers, whether both the Parents, or only one be so, and that as immediately proceeding from their own loins.

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The method I have proceeded in, the Reader will find in the second page; the necessity of proceeding in that method I have already intimated, which I desire the Reader to take notice of, that when he finds himself led into a large discourse for the confirmation of the two former subordinate Propositions there laid down, he may not suppose himself led out of his way, as to the proof of the main Proposition; those that will find out the mind and will of our Lord Christ, concerning the Baptism of Infants, must first know his will concerning their interest in the Covenant and the Promises thereof. And those that will know the will of Christ concerning the Infant seed of Believers interest in the Covenant and Promises thereof, must begin at the first establishment of it with *Abraham*, the common Father of all Believers.

And that I might proceed with more clearness, and with greater advantage to the Reader, I have indeavoured fully to explain, at least so far as my present design did require, that grand Promise of the Covenant, unto which the three subordinate Propositions do refer; where the Reader will find, that though God in that term *Seed*, did intend *Abraham's* whole Seed, or all those he should sustain the relation of a Father unto; yet according to the letter of that Promise, he had a direct and immediate respect to his natural Seed, yet after a different manner, according to a twofold consideration they fall under.

First,

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First, As his natural Children, as immediately proceeding from his own loins.

Secondly, As his natural Race and Posterity, immediately descending from him in after Ages.

Hence the Promise is to be considered of, either as a definite Promise made to his Seed, distributively taken, and so it did teach to all his Children, immediately proceeding from his own loins, and as it did respect his natural Seed, only to them, or as an indefinite Promise made to his Seed, collectively taken, and so it did extend to his whole natural Race and Posterity; my meaning more plainly is this, That this Promise was either so made to *Abraham's* natural Seed, as that each of them, as severally and particularly taken, had, as his Seed, an actual interest in it: Thus it was only made to his Children, as immediately proceeding from his own loins, or was so made to his Seed, as though none in particular had meerly, as his natural Seed, an actual interest in it: yet God did thereby signify and declare his will and purpose, to vouchsafe unto them, more generally considered, and that as the Seed of *Abraham*, that privilege of a Covenant-relation with himself; in definite Promises God speaks to particular persons, in indefinite Promises he speaks to none in particular, only declares his will and purpose concerning such a sort or species of men, to whom he makes good his Promises, according to the good pleasure of his own will, in a compliance with his eternal purposes and decrees.

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Now in my first subordinate Proposition, where I say, that God intended *Abraham's* natural Seed, as the immediate and next Subjects of that Promise, I mean his Children, as immediately proceeding from his own loins, and take the Promise as a definite Promise: This I have proved at large *Chap. 2.* and answered what Objections I could imagine might be made against it *Chap. 3.* whether I must refer the Reader for full satisfaction.

And this first Proposition being clear, the way lyes plain to the Second, it being a very rational Supposal, that what Priviledge or Blessing the Father enjoyed, should (supposing it alike com- petable to them as to him) descend to his Seed, as his Heirs; and that believing Gentiles *Abraham's* mystical Seed, have this Promise of the Covenant given to, and settled upon them, and that in the same latitude and extent in which it was given to *Abraham* himself, as a natural Father of natural Children, only allowing to him, as Father, that preheminence mentioned *page 65.* is evident.

First, From the very Tenour of the Promise, as at first made to *Abraham*, with reference to his Seed; it was made to his Seed in their Generations, that is, to them and to their Seed, or their Children, as immediately descending from them, for so the Covenant was established, not only with *Abraham* himself, but with him and his Seed, in their Generations; and in the same extent and latitude the Promises of the Covenant must be interpreted and understood, as the
Covenant

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Covenant was established with *Abraham*, and his Seed in their Generations, so the Promises of the Covenant were to him, and to his Seed in their Generations; and answerably I have so exprest my self throughout the ensuing Discourse.

And here let two things be carefully observed.

First, That the Promise is made to *Abraham's* whole Seed, both natural and mystical, in one and the same tenour.

Hence secondly, Look how the Promise was to be understood, as referring to either kinds or species, of his Seed, so it is to be understood, as referring to the other; as it was to be understood, as referring to his natural Seed, so it is to be understood, as referring to his mystical Seed.

Now that it was, as referring to *Abraham's* natural Seed, to be understood as including Parents and Children, is evident, partly because the Promise, as thus made, as referring to them, will admit of no other sense or meaning, consistent with the truth and faithfulness of God in his Promises, partly because God by his after dealing with the Jews, declares that to be the sense and meaning of it, and partly because the Prophets so expound it as to be fulfilled in Gospel times.

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Now this Promise being so to be understood, as referring to *Abraham's* natural Seed, it must needs be so understood, as referring to his mystical Seed.

Secondly, This second Proposition is further evident from the Promises and Prophecies of the old Testament, relating to new Testament times.

Thirdly, From the express letter of new Testament, which affirms positively, that the Blessing, not this or that part of the Blessing, but the Blessing simply and absolutely is come upon believing Gentiles by Christ.

Fourthly, From several passages in the new Testament, which though they do not in express terms hold forth this settlement of this Promise upon believing Gentiles, yet do plainly imply it.

For satisfaction in all which things, I am necessitated to refer the Reader to the Discourse it self, where he will find them largely spoken to.

These two former Propositions being established, the third, as I judge, will be questioned but by few; and it is evident thus, for as *Abraham's* whole Seed are in their Generations, that is, both Parents, and immediate Children, under the Promise, so they are under the Obligation
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of the Command, to keep the Covenant, that is; the Sign or Token of the Covenant; whence its evident, that as the Covenant that *Abraham's* Seed, in their Generations, then were, or after should be received into, had, and was to have a Sign or Token annexed to the administration of it; so that it alwayes was, and is the duty of Parents in Covenant, as to receive and bear that Sign or Token themselves, so to take care that their Infant-seed, as joynt Heirs with themselves of the same Promises, should receive and bear it; and consequently that believing Gentiles, they being the mystical Seed of *Abraham*, are still under the Obligation of this Command, and ought to be baptized themselves (Baptism being the present Sign and Token of the Covenant, into which they are received) so to see that their Infant-seed be also baptized; and as the Promise and Command are of an equal extent, so interest in this Promise declares the person so interested to have such a relation to the mystical Body of Christ, as is an undoubted ground of implantation and incorporation into that Body, as visible, by Baptism; the Promise is made unto Christ, and only to him, either personally or mystically considered; hence whoever have an interest in this Promise, they must undoubtedly have so far relation to Christ, as will warrant their implantation into him, as mystically considered, by Baptism, that being the only means appointed by Christ, for the implantation of
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any into his mystical Body: And further, we find the Apostle grounds his Exhortation to Baptism, upon interest, either in this or some other equivalent Promise, which he would never have done, had not interest in that Promise been a sufficient ground for the application or reception of Baptism, but I must come to a close.

And thus Reader, though there are some other things I would willingly have spoken to, yet I shall only acquaint thee with two things, and request two or three things of thee, and then dismiss thee, to the serious perusal of what is here tendered to thee.

First, That which I would acquaint thee with is, That whereas there are several Scriptures, usually insisted upon, for the proof of the lawfulness of this practice of Infant-baptism, which thou wilt find in the ensuing Treatise, either not at all, or very little touched upon, the reason is, not that I judged them impertinent or insufficient for the proof of that practice; I judge they are full and pertinent, and some of them, especially that 1 Cor. 7: 14. as managed in special by Mr. Baxter, unanswerable, but know, that I do but glean after others, and therefore have especially insisted, both in the Arguments I have managed, and Objections I have answered, upon such Scriptures as have been more briefly touched
upon

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upon by them; and would desire the Reader, as he hath opportunity, to take what they have said from those Scripture, for his more full confirmation (supposing any doubts may yet remain in his mind) in the Truth that I, in common with them, have pleaded for.

Secondly, Another thing (Reader) that I would acquaint thee with is this, That whereas 'tis possible thou mayest have met with some Objections which are not here taken notice of; the reason is, because I judged them no way able to counter-balance (in the judgments of any of a competent understanding) the evidence produced, in confirmation of what I have asserted, or else because they wholly concern others and not my self, in the way I have proceeded in,

That which I would request of thee is;

First, That thou take the three subordinate Propositions in that order I have laid them down, and fully weigh the first before thou proceed to the second, and then thoroughly weigh the second before thou proceed to the third, to be satisfied in the truth of the first will conduce not a little to thy entertaining the evidence produced for the confirmation of the second; and to be well established in these two, will much facilitate thy imbracement of the last,

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last, wherein the main Truth contended for is contained.

Secondly, Let me request a favourable construction of what weakness appears in the management of the whole Debate; thou wilt soon find, that the Discourse here put into thy hand comes abroad in a very mean dress, and not without many incongruities in expression, and too many interruptions in the sense; I am unwilling to trouble thee with an account how it is come thus to pass, let me only say, it comes to thee, not only through the hands of a Printer and Corrector, but of more than one Transcribers: I have only to request on my own behalf, that thou wilt have so much Charity for me, as to judge, it went out of my hands compleat, as to sense, though not cloathed with such apt and fit expressions as it might have been; on their behalf I shall request, that thou wilt not lay the blame upon any one of them, they have all their respective shares in it: I hope thou wilt be so ingenious, yea, so wise for thy self, as to look at the strength of the Argument, and not at the defects of the terms.

Thirdly, I have only this further to request of thee, That thou wilt joyn with me in fervent prayers unto God, like unto whom none can teach, that he will lead both thy self and
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me into all truth, and through the true knowledge and practice thereof, unto that Assembly of the First-born, among whom no contest, of what kind soever, have any place.

Jan. 20.
1670.

*Thine, in the Service
of the Gospel,*

Joseph Whiston.

Reader,

Reader, least thou shouldest either not understand, or misunderstand the Authors sence in these passages, wherein these Escapes have slipt the Press (which are somewhat more than is usual in so small a Treatise as this is) thou art desired before thou readest to correct them with thy Pen.

In the Preface, page 7. line ii. read incurring.

Page 13. line 1. blot out, in after ages; p. 18. l. 24. for that r. these are: p. 29. l. 23. put a full stop after family; p. 42. l. 19. r. indefinite: p. 44. l. 20. before the add all: p. 47. l. 2. f. never r. now: p. 49. l. 12. r. from: p. 52. l. 20. f. party r. parts: p. 55 l. 20. f. the r. no: p. 57. l. 29. blot out verse 12. p. 68. l. 18. r. inconsistent: p. 76. l. 32. f. as r. is: p. 78. l. 24. f. we r. he: p. 84. l. 7. blot out that; l. 14. r. general: p. 87. l. 1. f. I r. it; p. 93. l. 10. r. his: p. 94 ^{ms} 108. l. 10 f. father r. faith: l. 20. r. that; p. 112. l. 1. blot out himself; p. 113. l. 14. r. ther houses: p. 123. l. 28. blot out one: p. 135. l. 24. r. concerns; p. 142. blot out part of the second and third line & p. 147. l. 12. blot out to say that; p. 149. l. 19. blot out all; p. 153. l. 25. r. carefully: p. 179. l. 12 r. political: p. 184. l. 9. f. was r. as: p. 197 l. 31. f. but r. that: p. 203. l. ult. r. their: p. 212. l. 17. r. not: p. 216, l. 28. r. offert: p. 242. l. 17 r. when, so p. 245. l. 24 p. 246 l. 11 f. generally r. Gentiles; p. 249. l. 9. f. or r. and; p. 258, l. 28. r. contradistinction. p. 272. before only add not; p. 273. f. there r. these; p. 306 l. 26. r. deduced.

There are, its true, some other mistakes of a less moment, which the Reader will easily perceive and rectifie as he goes along, or if he discern them not he is in no danger to be prejudiced by them; as sometimes the plural number put for the singular, sometimes the singular for the plural. The Reader must also take notice of a mistake in the Folio's, the Folio's from 156. to 177. being wanting, where yet nothing is wanting in the Book of what was intended.



Infant-Baptism from Heaven, and not of Men.

CHAP. I.

The main Proposition, discussed in the ensuing Treatise, laid down; in order to the confirmation of which, three subordinate Propositions proposed. The grand Promise of the Covenant, wherein God promised to be a God to Abraham and his Seed in their Generations largely explained. The full mind and meaning of God in that Promise held forth in five Conclusions. The sence in which the first subordinate Proposition is to be understood, declared.

Proposition.

That it is the will of our Lord Jesus Christ, that the Infant-seed of one or both believing Parents should be baptized.

For the more full evidencing the truth asserted in this grand Proposition, I shall lay down
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and speak to three subordinate Propositions, which being distinctly and fully proved, the truth of our grand Proposition, will as certainly and infallibly be inferred, and concluded from them, as the salvation of any particular Believer can be inferred and concluded from that universal Proposition (*viz.*) *He that believes shall be saved.*

These subordinate Propositions are,
First, *That when God, at his first entering Covenant with Abraham, promised to be a God to him and to his Seed, he intended his natural Seed, as the first and next Subjects of that Promise.*

Secondly, *That this Promise in the sense after to be declar'd, is by God himself settled upon and confirmed to believing Gentiles.*

Thirdly, *That all those that are under, or are the actual Subjects of that Promise, ought, according to the will of Christ, to be baptized.*

To begin with the first: *Viz.*

1. That when God at his first entering Covenant with *Abraham*, promised to be a God to him and to his Seed, he intended his natural Seed as the first and next Subjects of that promise. *Abraham's* natural Seed were intended as the immediate Subjects of that Promise, as made to him with reference to his Seed : The Promise I have
reference

reference unto, is that in *Gen. 17. 7.* where note, that I do not say that they are the only, nor yet the principal Subjects of that promise, but the immediate and first subjects, the promise in the letter of it did immediately and primarily respect them.

Now that the sence and meaning of this Proposition may more fully appear, and all mistakes about it be obviated and prevented, I shall enquire into three things with reference to that Promise.

First, Who are intended in that term Seed, according to the true and full acceptation of it in that promise.

Secondly, Under what notion, or in what capacity *Abraham* is to be considered as receiving that promise, or having that promise made to him by God.

Thirdly, What is the true intent of that promise, in regard of the extent. and latitude on the one hand, and the limitations on the other.

For the first, We may observe that the Scripture speaks of a twofold seed of *Abraham*.

1. There is his natural Seed.
2. There is his spiritual or mystical Seed.

I shall speak to this term Seed, in the latter notion of it, in the first place, namely, as it intends or signifieth. *Abraham's* spiritual or mystical seed, and thus by seed we are to understand Christ mystical, or whole Christ, as I may so speak, including both

Christ himself as Head, and the whole universal Church, consisting both of Jews and Gentiles, as the Body : Thus this term Seed is taken, *Gal. 3. 16.* When God made promise to Abraham, he saith not, to thy seeds, as of many, but to thy seed, which is Christ ; id est, Christ mystical ; and thus the Gentile-Proselytes under the first Testament, Servants bought with money, or born in the house, were accounted for *Abraham's* seed ; all those that were admitted into fellowship with the people of God in the Covenant, and benefits, blessings and priviledges of it ; how or by what means soever they came to have their admission, were accounted for *Abraham's* seed, and had the actual enjoyment of the good of that Covenant (I mean so many as did actually enjoy it) as *Abraham's* seed, by vertue of this Promise, *I will be thy God, and the God of thy seed* : So believing Gentiles, or any other, who with them have admission into the Covenant, are accounted for *Abraham's* seed ; all that inherit the good promised, inheriting of it, under that notion, as his seed, by vertue of that forementioned Promise ; and thus the natural seed of *Abraham* in another sense were his mystical seed ; the whole mystical body of Christ made up, as I have said, both of Jews and Gentiles, is the seed here intended : And this spiritual or mystical seed of *Abraham* falls under a two-fold consideration.

1. As visible and denominative.
2. As invisible and real.

The Apostle gives us this distribution of *Abraham's seed*, *Rom. 9. 6.* *All are not Israel that are of Israel, &c.* that is, all that are of the mystical body of Christ as visible, are not really and truly of his body mystical as invisible; the visible body of Christ is of a larger extent than his invisible; 'tis all one as if the Apostle had said, some are visible, and denominatively the seed of *Abraham*, who yet are not truly and internally his seed: That this is the meaning of the Apostle, is evident from the following verses; of which place more hereafter. Hence this term *seed* is to be understood sometimes of his seed as visible and denominative, sometime of his seed as invisible and real: in the former sence we are to understand it in the place forementioned, *Galat. 3. 16.* By Christ we are to understand the mystical body of Christ as visible, as is evident, because 'tis by Baptism that the several members are incorporated into, and united unto the body of Christ, as here spoken of.

Now Baptism doth not properly incorporate into the body of Christ as invisible, but as visible; in the latter sence we are to understand it, *Rom. 9. 8.* Seed here we are to understand of the elect, and the meaning is, that all they that are the children of the flesh are not elected, and in that respect not the Children of God, nor accounted for the seed.

Some that are the children of the flesh are the children of God, and are accounted for the seed, but all that are the children of the flesh are not the children of God, nor accounted for the seed;

that is in this strict notion and consideration of this term seed , as it signifieth the true internal and invisible seed of *Abraham*.

Children of God and Seed here are , *termini convertibiles*, convertible terms : now as persons are denominated the children of God, either in regard of their visible and external appearing so to be, or in regard of their really and internally being such ; (saith Christ , *'Tis not meet to take the childrens bread and give it to dogs*) it's meant of the things of the Gospel , primarily appertaining to the Jews , as yet the Covenant-people of God : Now Christ calls them, indefinitely considered, children, that is children of God ; when as it appears by their so general after-rejection , but few of them were really and internally the children of God.

So some are the seed of *Abraham*, and so to be accounted , in regard of their visible and outward appearing so to be, who yet are not really and internally his seed.

Others are not only visibly, and in regard of an external appearance the seed of *Abraham*, but are internally and really so : Of these latter, this term Seed, in this place, is to be understood ; the children of the promise are accounted for the Seed, that is, they, and they only are internally the Seed of *Abraham*, I mean his spiritual and mystical seed , for in that sense this term Seed is here to be taken.

Secondly, There is *Abraham's* natural Seed ; only for preventing mistakes. Note,

That though I distinguish between *Abraham's* spiritual

spiritual and natural Seed, yet the difference between them is only respective ; the same persons might be, and in respect of many were both his natural, and also his spiritual Seed ; of which more after : This being noted, I say, there is *Abraham's* natural Seed ; and this phrase, *Abraham's* natural Seed, may be taken two ways.

1. As signifying his Children descending immediately from his own loins ; as it is said of *Ishmael* he was *Abraham's* seed, *Gen. 21. 13.* *He is thy seed*, saith God to *Abraham*, speaking of *Ishmael* ; and the like may be said of all his other children, they were his natural seed.

2. This phrase may be taken as signifying his whole race or posterity , or all those that did mediate descend from him in after ages : thus *Gen. 15. 18.* *Unto thy seed*, saith God , *have I given this land* ; it is meant of his race or posterity , or his seed mediate descending from him.

Secondly, Under what notion, or in what capacity *Abraham* is to be considered, as receiving this promise from God.

I answer , That *Abraham* is to be considered both as a natural and also as a spiritual father, or both as a natural Father, and as the Father of the faithful. That God did look on *Abraham* as giving him this promise as the father of the faithful, is evident from *Rom. 4. 11, 12, 13.* and some have thought that he was eyed and looked upon only under that notion and in that capacity ; but

That he was not only looked upon as the father of the faithful, but as a natural father, is evident by this Argument.

If *Abraham's* natural seed were intended as the immediate and next subjects of this promise, and that as such, then *Abraham* as receiving this promise, or having this promise made to him with reference unto them, must needs be eyed and looked upon as a natural father; but the former is true, therefore the latter; the consequence in the major proposition, cannot be denied; for if God intended *Abraham's* natural seed as such, that is, as his natural seed, then he must needs eye *Abraham* as a natural father, as making this promise to him: Now that he did intend *Abraham's* natural seed, will, I doubt not, be sufficiently evident by the proof of this first proposition; and that they were intended as his natural seed is evident, because in respect of some of them, they could be looked upon under no other notion, they could not be looked upon as his spiritual seed, for such they were not, whether we respect election or actual faith, take it of *Ishmael*, he was neither elected, nor had actual faith; as for what some think concerning his future repentance 'tis wholly groundless, we having no intimation of it throughout the whole Scripture; but the contrary is intimated, or rather plainly implied in that *Rom. 9*. Now if he (and 'tis like the same was the case of some at least of *Abraham's* Sons by *Keturah*) could not be looked upon as *Abraham's* spiritual seed, he must needs be looked upon

on, under that very notion and consideration, as his natural seed, and as such was intended as one subject of that promise: And whereas some think that the Apostle, *Rom. 4.* expounds this promise as made to *Abraham* only as the father of the faithful, 'tis a great mistake.

That he was eyed as the father of the faithful is readily granted; but that he was eyed *only* as such a father is denied, and is not in the least intimated by the Apostle in that place: But not to stay on this, it is sufficiently evident, that as *Abraham* sustained that two-fold relation, *viz.* of a natural and of a spiritual father, so he was eyed under both notions, as receiving this promise, on the behalf or with reference to his seed.

Thirdly, What is the true intent of this promise, in regard of the extent and latitude on the one hand, and the limitation on the other.

Before I answer this Question, let me only premise, that the true determination of this Question conduceth not a little (if I mistake not) to the clearing up and determining the truth pleaded for, as the not right understanding the true intent of this promise in the regards mentioned, hath been one considerable cause of so many rejecting the truth we plead for, and their too ready embracing of the opinion we oppose: Therefore I desire, that what I have to say in answer to the Question, may be diligently attended to.

First then, for the intent of this promise, in regard of the extent and latitude of it, take it in these two particulars.

1. That under this term Seed in this promise, the whole seed of *Abraham*, whether natural or mystical, are comprehended: hence though I say his natural seed, as afore expressed, were firstly and immediately intended as the first and next subjects of this promise; yet not excluding any other, who according to Scripture account were to be reckoned unto *Abraham* as his seed: As we are not to interpret this term Seed of Christ personally, so as to exclude his mystical body; nor of his mystical body, invisibly and internally considered, so as to exclude any that are of his mystical body, as externally and visibly considered; nor of his mystical body, whether visible or invisible, to the excluding of his natural seed, whether immediate or mediate: So on the other hand, we must not limit it to his immediate seed, to the excluding of his mediate, nor to either, so as to exclude his mystical seed, but we are to understand it in its full latitude and extent, as comprehending and including his whole seed.

That *Abrahams* natural seed, as immediately proceeding from his own loins, were intended, will appear by the proof of this first proposition, and is the only thing there to be proved, that his whole race and posterity as mediately descending from him, were intended shall be granted.

That *Abrahams* spiritual or mystical seed were intended is sufficiently evident, as from the denomination they bear of *Abrahams* seed ; so by their inheriting all the good of the Covenant of Grace, as *Abraham's* seed, by vertue of this very promise, as will more fully appear by the proof of the second proposition ; so that, I say, this term Seed is to be understood in such an extent and latitude, as to take in and comprehend *Abraham's* whole seed ; but this I say, that his natural seed were firstly and immediately intended, as the first and next subjects of that promise.

2. Which I desire with the like care may be attended to : This promise, as made to *Abraham's* whole seed, was made to them in their respective generations, under which phrase, their generations, we must understand Parents, and their Children immediately descending from their own loins : so that the promise runs to *Abraham's* seed in their generations, that is, to all his seed, and to their respective natural seed in conjunction with themselves.

Secondly, We may consider the intent of this promise, in regard of the limitations of it ; and thus this promise had a two-fold limitation.

1. It had a limitation in regard of the persons actually interested in it.

2. In regard of the continuance of that their interest in, and their actual possession and enjoyment

ment of the good of the promise they were before interested in.

1. Then I say, this promise was given to *Abraham* under a limitation, in regard of the persons actually interested in it; and thus it was limited to *Abraham's* seed in their respective generations, including, as before, parents and their immediate children; my meaning is, that this promise taken as a definite promise made to *Abraham*, with reference to his seed distributively taken, that is, as they were severally and each in particular intended in it, so it did reach to and take in only *Abraham's* seed in their respective generations, they and their immediate children.

It's true, as it was an indefinite promise made to *Abraham's* natural seed, collectively or generally taken, so it had respect vnto his whole race and posterity, whether mediately or immediately descending from him; but I say, take it as a definite promise made to *Abraham's* seed, distributively or particularly taken: so it was made only to each of them respectively in their generations; that is, to them and their immediate children. To explain my meaning, take for instance any parent that was related to *Abraham* as one of his seed, let *Isaac* be the instance: *Isaac* was one of *Abraham's* seed, and as so related to *Abraham* was under this promise, That God would be a God to him in his generations: Now as in this phrase, his generations, *Isaac*, and his children immediately descending

descending from him ~~in after ages~~, were personally included, or particularly intended in it, it was to *Isaac*, as *Abraham's* seed, in his generations, to him and to his immediate children: As this promise is to be understood in the extent mentioned, as including parents and children; so it is not to be enlarged beyond what was the true intendment of God in it. Now though God made it to each of *Abraham's* seed, whether immediately descending from his own loins, or otherwise standing related to him, as his seed in their generations, yet his intendment was not, that all that should successively, in following ages, descend from them respectively, should be included as joynt subjects with them of this promise, so as to claim, by vertue of their relation unto them, a joynt right and title to the promise with them; his intendment only was, that his seed in their generations, that is, parents, and immediate children, should be accounted as joynt subjects of this promise; and in this regard this promise was one and the same, or ran in one and the same tenour to *Abraham*, and to his seed, only allowing to *Abraham* something of preheminence (hereafter to be explained) above any of his seed; but otherwise the promise, for the substance of it, was one and the same, or ran in one and the same tenour to both; for the promise was to *Abraham* and his seed; which promise, as a definite promise made to him, with reference to his natural seed, distributively taken, extended no further than to his natural seed, immediately descending from his

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own loins ; and was not to his whole race and posterity, no not by *Isaac* and *Jacob*, as many seem to have very much mistaken, to the no little obscuring the truth we now plead for : I still grant that the promise, as an indefinite promise, had respect to his whole race and posterity, and that not only by *Isaac* and *Jacob*, but *Ishmael* and his Sons by *Keturah* : but yet as a definite promise, as before exprest, it extended no further than to his own immediate children, even *Jacob* himself had not an actual interest in this promise in his infancy, as he was one of *Abraham's* natural posterity, but as he was included in the promise as made to *Isaac* (one of *Abraham's* seed) in his generations ; and in the very same tenour the promise runs to *Abraham's* seed, That as God was a God to *Abraham* and his natural seed, so he would be a God to them and their natural seed, that is, to them in their generations : But that's the first limitation of this promise made to *Abraham*, with reference to his seed.

2. This promise was given unto *Abraham* under a limitation, in regard of the continuance of his seeds interest in, and their actual possession and injoyment of the good promised, that they had afore an interest in ; and thus it was limited both to the seed and their respective generations, as they should become, and continue to be *Abraham's* mystical or spiritual seed, through their personal entring into, and walking in the steps of the faith and obedience of their father *Abraham*.

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Take *Isaac*, he was one of *Abraham's* natural seed, and as such was intended in this promise, That God would be a God to him in his generations; that is, as before expressed, to him, and to his immediate children; but now the continuance of his interest in, and actual enjoyment of the good of the promise, as grown up to years of maturity, did depend upon, and necessarily require his personal acceptation and performance of the conditions of the Covenant, into which he had, as one of *Abraham's* natural seed, admission in his infancy; hence his childrens actual interest in, and right unto the promise (which was in part the good of the promise, as made to him) depended upon his mystical relation to *Abraham*, and not meerly upon his natural relation to *Abraham*.

For if so be he had not accepted of, and performed the conditions of the Covenant, his children had wholly lost that their right to and interest in the promise, which was granted unto them with himself, as included in his generations.

And hence it will undeniably follow, that all *Abraham's* natural race and posterity by *Isaac* and *Jacob*, held their interest in, and right to the promise, and enjoyed the good promised, either as *Abraham's* mystical seed, or as included in the generations of those that were his mystical seed, for their bare natural relation to *Abraham* was not enough to preserve their own interest, nor convey a right to and interest in the promise to their children,

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And from all it will follow , which I desire may be diligently observed , that the case of believing Gentiles , supposing the promise to run in the same extent and latitude to them that it did run in to the natural posterity of *Abraham* (as I doubt not , through divine assistance , shall be made evident) that it doth.

And the case of the Jews , or natural posterity of *Abraham*, is one and the same , in regard of their own and their childrens right to, and interest in the promise : the natural posterity of *Abraham*, or the Jews, when once grown up , held their interest in , and right to the promise, not barely as his natural posterity, but as accepting of , and performing the conditions of the Covenant, so far, as not absolutely to disannul that their interest in it , and consequently as *Abraham's* mystical seed, and as such they conveyed a right to, and interest in the same Covenant and Promise , themselves were under to their children.

And the same is the case of believing Gentiles, they have a right to, and interest in the promise, as accepting of, and performing the conditions of the Covenant, and as so doing, convey an interest in, and right to the same Covenant and Promise, they themselves are under, to their children, by vertue of this promise as made unto *Abraham*, with reference to his seed in their generations.

The truth of what is now asserted concerning the extent and limitations of this promise, will

I doubt not sufficiently appear when I come to the proof of the second Proposition.

The sum of what hath been hitherto said, take in brief in these five Conclusions.

First, That when God entred Covenant with *Abraham*, and promised to be a God to him and his seed in their generations, he intended, according to the full latitude and extent of that promise, his whole seed, whether Jews or Gentiles, grown persons, or infants, all those who, according to the Scripture account, should bear the denomination of *Abraham's* seed, how, or by what means soever that denomination was applicable unto them, were comprehended under this term Seed.

Secondly, Although the promise extend to, and ought to be interpreted of *Abraham's* whole seed, as now expressed, yet God in it had a peculiar and special regard to his natural seed, whether immediately or mediately descending from him.

Thirdly, That the natural seed, race or posterity of *Abraham* enjoyed an interest in, and right to this promise, and together therewith a Covenant-state and relation God-ward successively, for so long time; not barely as his natural seed, but as his mystical seed; that is, through parents so far performing the conditions of the Covenant, as to preserve their own Covenant state and relation themselves, conveying to their children the same interest in, and right to the Covenant and Promises thereof that themselves had.

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Fourthly,

Fourthly, That in and among the seed of *Abraham*, as considered these various wayes aforementioned, there is a certain number afore chosen and elected of God, to whom in a peculiar and special manner, this term Seed is applicable, and that in regard of their eternal designation to enjoy the good promised; the whole number of those, whom visibly and denominatively were to be accounted for *Abraham's* seed, were intended in this promise; yet the promise was not intended by God infallibly to secure the good promised to every individual person, who in regard of an external and visible denomination, were to be accounted for his seed, but there is a certain number chosen of God from eternity, actually to inherit the good promised, who in time are savingly wrought upon, and these, in a special and peculiar manner, are in the esteem of God accounted for the seed.

Fifthly, That yet they were the natural seed of *Abraham*, as immediately descending from his own loins, who were intended in this promise, as the next and immediate subjects of it, and that the natural seed of *Abraham* intended in this first Proposition.

And that is the thing that I shall now apply my self to the proof of.

CHAP. II.

The truth of the first Proposition, as before explained, evidenced two ways.

1. *More generally, by such Arguments as will evince, that all Abraham's immediate natural seed, one as well as another, were intended as the immediate and next subjects of this Promise.*

2. *More particularly, by instancing in such of his natural seed, as upon a supposition, of whose being intended in the Promise, it will necessarily follow, that all his natural seed were in like manner intended, and proving that they were indeed intended by God in that Promise.*

THAT when God, at his first entring Covenant with Abraham, promised to be a God to him and his seed, intended his natural seed, as immediately descending from his own loins, as the immediate and next subjects of that promise, may be evinced two ways:

1. *More generally.*

2. *More particularly.*

1. More generally : And thus I shall only offer a two-fold Argument.

The first shall be taken from the Promise it self, as taken according to the literal and most proper sence and signification of those words it is exprest in, and it is this :

What God speaks unto men ought to be interpreted and understood according to the literal and most proper sence and signification of those words he expresth himself in, unless there be some necessary Reason enforcing a recession from that literal and most proper sence and signification of his words.

But according to the literal and most proper sence and signification of the words of this Promise, now made to *Abraham* his natural seed, immediately descending from his own loins, and that universally one as well as the other must be intended, as the immediate and next subjects of it, and there is no Reason enforcing our recession from that literal and most proper sence and signification of his words : Therefore we ought to interpret and understand them, as intending his immediate natural seed, as the immediate and next subjects of that Promise. When God said to *Abraham*, He would be a God to him and to his seed in their generations, surely the literal and most proper sence and signification of the words, wherein the Promise is exprest, must needs lead him to apply it as to himself, so to his immediate natural seed, and that universally.

It's true, God promised to *Abraham*, That he would make him the Father of many Nations ; and doubtless *Abraham* did understand the Promise, as reaching and taking in all those he should sustain the relation of a Father unto.

But no Reason could be drawn from the words of the Promise it self , why either *Abraham*, or any other since, should understand it, as intending his remote or adopted seed, to the excluding of his own natural seed, as immediately descending from him.

Now that what God speaks ought to be interpreted, as before exprest, cannot be doubted by any.

And therefore all that possibly can be objected, for the invalidating this argument, is, That there is a necessity of interpreting and understanding this Promise, as now made to *Abraham*, differently from what the literal and proper signification of the words seems to import : Whether there be any such necessity shall be considered by and by.

In the mean time let it be observed , that we have the letter of the Promise on our side , as to the interpretation put upon it.

The second Argument shall be taken from *Abraham's* applying of the seal or token of that Covenant, whereof the Promise, under consideration, was a principal part, to his immediate and natural seed, and that universally to one as well as to another , and that under that very notion and consideration, as the seal and token of the Covenant.

Hence I argue,

If *Abraham*, according to the will and appointment of God, did apply the seal or token of that Covenant (wherein the Promise, under consideration, was one special Article on Gods part) to all his immediate natural seed, to one as well as to the other, and that under that very notion and consideration, as the seal or token of the Covenant, then God in that Promise must needs intend all his immediate natural seed, as the Subjects of it : but the former is true, therefore the latter.

The Assumption sure cannot once be questioned by any that have read over the Book of *Genesis* : yet *exabundanti*.

Let me touch upon the proof of it in the several branches or clauses of it : It contains three Branches.

1. That *Abraham* did apply the seal or token of that Covenant, wherein this Promise is contained, unto all his immediate natural seed : If that term Seal offend any, let them keep only to the other word token ; it's all one as to my present purpose. That Circumcision was the seal or token of the Covenant, that God now entred into with *Abraham* and his seed, is past all doubt ; 'tis expressly called, *The Token of the Covenant*, *Gen. 17. 11*. *Ye shall circumcise the foreskin of your flesh, and it shall be a token of the Covenant between me and you.* A token of the Covenant : Of what Covenant ? Why, of that, no doubt, now established with *Abraham*, and his

his seed in their generations : and that *Abraham* did apply this token of the Covenant to all his natural seed, is evident, partly from Gods Command, read that *Gen.* 17. 9, 10, 11, 12, 13. partly from *Abraham's* practice; mention is expressly made of his circumcising of *Ishmael* and *Isaac*, verſe 23. with *Gen* 21. 4.

But ſome will ſay, There's is no mention of his circumcising his Sons by *Keturah*.

To that I anſwer, No more is there mention made of *Jacob's* circumciſion, nor of his twelve Sons circumciſion, and yet ſhall it be queſtioned, whether they were circumciſed or no? The command of God engaging it and the teſtimony that God gives of *Abraham's* faithfulness, and his circumcising all his male ſervants, is ſuperabundant evidence that he did circumciſe them, though their circumciſion be not mentioned : So that it's undeniable, that *Abraham* did apply the ſeal or token of the Covenant to all his Seed, immediately deſcending from his own loins.

2. That *Abraham* did apply this ſeal or token of the Covenant to his ſeed, under that very notion and conſideration as the ſeal or token of it, this is evident thus:

Look under what notion God commanded it to be applyed, under that notion and conſideration *Abraham* did apply it : That *Abraham* did apply it under that notion as the ſeal or token of the Covenant, as he was commanded, is unqueſtionable, from the forementioned teſtimony that God gave of him.

Now that God did command it to be applied under that notion and consideration, is evident, because in the Command, concerning the application of it, he calls it the Covenant, *My Covenant shall be in your flesh*: that is, the token of my Covenant, and that as the token of it.

3. That what *Abraham* did was according to the will and appointment of God, this is past doubt by what is already said; *Abraham* acted in circumcising his Children according to the express command he had received from God; so that the Assumption is in every branch and clause of it undeniable.

Secondly, For the Consequence in the Major Proposition, viz. That in as much as *Abraham* did apply the seal or token of the Covenant, as now expressed, it must needs follow, that God in this Promise did intend his immediate natural seed, as the first subjects of it: The validity of this Consequence, if any shall question it, will appear these three ways.

First, From the sameness of the word used in the Promise and in the Command, concerning the application of the seal: The Promise is, *To thee and to thy Seed*; the Command is, *Thou shalt therefore keep my Covenant, thou and thy Seed*.

Now who can once imagine, that this term Seed should be used restrictively in the Promise, as intending only one or more of *Abraham's* Children; exclusive of the rest, and universally

sally in the Command, as intending all his Children.

That it is to be understood universally in the Command, is past all doubt ; God explains himself in the very next words , *Every Man-child amongst you shall be circumcised.*

Now those that should take this term Seed restrictively in the Promise , had need for their acquitment in the sight of God for their so doing, have as clear a warrant from God as *Abraham* had, to take it in an unlimited sence in the Command ; whether they have so or no , concerns them to look to it.

Secondly , It appears from hence , because otherwise the seal or token of the Covenant should , and that according to the appointment of God, be aplyed to some, unto whom it signified and betokened nothing at all ; it should be aplyed , and that as the seal or token of the Covenant, to some wholly uninteressed and unconcerned in the Covenant, of which it was the seal or token.

Now how remote is it from a rational probability, that God should appoint the token of the Covenant, and that under that notion and consideration , as the token of it , to be aplyed to persons neither externally nor internally interessed or concerned in the Covenant, of which it was the token, let but any sober person exercise his reason , and see whether there be so much as the remotest probability of it.]

It's true, God might have commanded the same thing to have been acted upon persons, under another notion or consideration, for some special end appointed by himself; but that he should appoint the same action, with reference unto all, and that to be performed under one and the same notion and consideration, and yet, that some of these should be in Covenant, and others not at all concerned in it, is a thing not to be supposed by any man, that hath the free use of his own reason.

Thirdly, It appears, because in case the seal or token of the Covenant had been applyed to any in the sence afore expressed, no way interested or concerned in the Covenant, nor the Promise thereof, then God had spoken that which had been absolutely false, which far be it from any man, that pretends to Christianity, once to imagine: yet the denying the same persons to be intended in the Promise, that were intended in the Command, concerning the application of the seal, doth necessarily infer it. For pray observe it: Saith the Lord of Circumcision, *It shall be the token of the Covenant between me and you,* Gen. 17. 11. Now had any of these male-children, whose circumcision is commanded in the foregoing verses, been wholly unconcerned in the Covenant, then it could not have been a token of the Covenant between God and them; and consequently it had been false to say, it should be a token of the Covenant between him and them: for according to the opinions in this

first Proposition opposed, it was not the token of the Covenant between God and them, in as much as the male-children, now intended, were not in the Covenant, or there was no Covenant between God and them.

Now for God to command, that every Male-child amongst them should be circumcised, and then to say of Circumcision, as so applied, that it should be a token of the Covenant between him and them, whereas there was some of those Male-children wholly uninterested in this Covenant, or betwixt God and whom there was no such Covenant, had been absolutely false; for it was not, it could not possibly be a token of the Covenant between God and them, between him and whom there was no Covenant: there can be no token of a Covenant between whom there is no Covenant made: But now saith God, *It shall be a token of the Covenant between me and them*: So that to grant, that *Abraham*, according to the will and appointment of God did apply the seal or token of the Covenant to all his immediate natural Seed, and that as the seal or token of the Covenant, and yet to affirm, that some of his natural Seed were not in Covenant, or not intended in the Promises thereof, is to ascribe falshood unto God, or to charge him with speaking what was absolutely false.

And therefore undoubtedly *Abraham's* whole natural Seed were intended in the Promise, as the immediate and next subjects of it.

Secondly,

Secondly, Let us instance in such of *Abraham's* immediate Children, as upon supposition of their being intended in the Promise, under consideration, it will undoubtedly follow, that all his immediate Children were in it : and thus I shall instance in these two of his Children, that the Scripture makes more frequent mention of, *viz. Ishmael and Isaac* : and I shall begin with the latter first.

First, That *Isaac* was intended in this Promise, as one of the Subjects of it, is fully evident from that one passage of God to *Abraham*, *Gen. 21. 12.* cited and expounded by the Apostle, *Rom. 9. 7 8. In Isaac shall thy seed be called.* We read in the tenth verse, *Sarabs* request to *Abraham*, to cast out *Hagar* and her Son *Ishmael* : Now this was grievous to *Abraham*. God had promised to be a God to him and to his seed : *Ishmael* is one of his Seed ; hence to cast him out, and thereby disinherit him of the blessing promised, was very grievous to *Abraham*. Now God to allay *Abraham's* grief tells him, Though he should answer *Sarabs* request, yet in *Isaac* should his Seed be called ; that is, in *Isaac* and his line the Promise should have its accomplishment. Though *Ishmael* was cast out, and thereby disinherited of the good promised, yet the Promise should stand firm, and receive its full accomplishment in *Isaac* and his line, which could not have been, had he not been intended in the Promise : had not *Isaac* been intended, not exclusive of others, but inclusive of himself, the

the Promise could not have received its accomplishment in him, but had failed in the ejection of *Ishmael*: and hence the Apostle tells us, That *Abraham* sojourned in *Canaan*, as a Stranger in a strange Land, with *Isaac* and *Jacob*, heirs with him of the same Promise: Of what Promise? Surely of that, wherein God engaged himself to be a God to him, and to his Seed, and to give him and them the Land of *Canaan* for an everlasting possession: both these Promises are joyned together as one Promise, *Gen. 17.6*. Now of this Promise *Isaac* was an heir with *Abraham*, and therefore must needs be included in it as one of the Subjects of it.

Secondly, That *Ishmael* was intended as part of *Abraham's* Seed in this Promise, is evident by this one Consideration.

Not to multiply, where truth is sufficiently evident, *viz.* His ejection out of *Abraham's* Family, and his being disinherited of the Covenant and Promise thereby.

It's true, his bare ejection out of *Abraham's* Family would not demonstrate his being in *Abraham's* Covenant, and under the Promise thereof; while in his Family he had Servants in his house, who yet might be after cast out, but that would not conclude them to have had an interest in his Covenant: but now as by that his ejection out of *Abraham's* Family, he was disinherited of, or disinterested in the Promise, or was divested of his right and title to it, doth undeniably evidence his right and title to it

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antecedent to that his ejection; for he could not be divested or disinherited of that he never had, or was never an heir unto.

Now that *Ishmael*, with and by means of his rejection out of *Abraham's* Family, was divested of a right and title he afore had to the Covenant, and to the promises thereof, is evident by these two Reasons.

First, Because his ejection was typical of their ejection out of the Gospel Church, and rejection from the benefits and blessings of the Covenant of Grace, who under a Profession of Christianity, or of being the Covenant-people of God, do adhere to the Law for Righteousness and Life. That *Ishmael's* casting out of *Abraham's* Family was thus typical, is expressly affirmed by the Apostle, *Gal. 4. 30.* compared with the foregoing Context.

Now his bare ejection out of *Abraham's* Family, could not have made him a proper type of the persons beforementioned, in as much as then there had been no direct Analogy or proportion between the type and antitype. How his meer casting out of *Abraham's* Family should represent, or foreshew, and predict the ejection of the persons forementioned out of the Gospel Church, and divestment of all title to the benefits and blessings of the Covenant of Grace cannot be imagined; for as much as others might be cast out of *Abraham's* Family, whose ejection was not of any such typical signification.

Secondly,

Secondly, That *Ishmael*, together with and by means of his ejection out of *Abraham's* Family, was divested of a right and title, which, while in his house, he had to the Covenant and promises thereof, is evident, because *Sarah*, in her request to *Abraham* to cast him out, proposed that as her end, viz. That he might not inherit with *Isaac* her Son; *Gen. 21. 10.* *Cast out this bond woman and her son, for the son of the bond-woman shall not be heir with my son, even with Isaac:* And that it was the good promised in this Covenant, that she desires his disinheriting of, is evident by *Abraham's* griefs; had it been only the temporal possessions of *Abraham*, his not inheriting of which she proposeth as her end, in desiring his ejection, there had been no reason of *Abraham's* grief, in as much as he was under the promise of outward blessings, notwithstanding that his ejection: Now there had been no reason for *Sarah*, to propose that end in her request, to have him cast out, unless he had, and would continue to have had, during his abode in the house, a like visible right and title to the Promise that *Isaac* had, she might have desired his ejection for some other reason; but for that, that he might not inherit with *Isaac*, she could not rationally do, it would have been an impertinent reason, for her to have desired his ejection, that he might not inherit with her own Son, in case he had no right nor title to the promised Inheritance, whilst in the house.

For a woman to desire her Husband to cast out

out a Servant out of the family for that reason, that he might not inherit with her own Children, when as whether he should continue or be cast out of the family, he could lay no claim to to the Inheritance, would be ridiculous : Hence *Sarabs* pleading that reason , or propounding that end of her request , plainly implyes , that *Ishmael*, during his abode in *Abraham's* Family, had at least a vilible right and title to the inheritance promised, which would be disanulled by that his ejection : Hence it is evident, *Ishmael*, as well as *Isaac* , was intended in that Promise, and that both were joynt Heirs to, or Subjects of that Promise, as externally made to *Abraham*, with reference to his Seed.

Now then seeing these two, *viz.* *Ishmael* and *Isaac*, were intended , there can be no reason imagined, why we should suppose *Abraham's* other Children to be excluded ; for they were either elected or not elected ; if they were, their case was the same with *Isaac's*, if not, their case was the same with *Ishmael's* ; and therefore both *Ishmael* and *Isaac* being intended, there is no shew of reason to suppose the other excluded ; but we may partly from the parity of their cases, with the case of the one or the other of these two ; and partly from the evidence of the foregoing Arguments , positively conclude, that all *Abraham's* natural Seed, according to the intendment of this first proposition , were intended in this promise, as the first and next subjects of it : but let that suffice for the proof of the first proposition.

CHAP. III.

Objections against the first subordinate Proposition considered and answered.

THUS having seen somewhat (for much more might be produced) of that evidence the Scriptures give in, for the confirmation of this first Proposition, I shall now consider the Objections I have yet met with, or can possibly imagine may be made, that have any appearance of weight in them, against the truth hitherto asserted and pleaded for: That which I plead for is this, That God in that grand Promise of the Covenant, wherein he engaged himself to be a God to *Abraham* and his seed in their generations, intended his natural Seed, and that indefinitely one as well as another, immediately proceeding from his own loins, as the immediate and next Subjects of it. Now at least some (I suppose not all) of those, whose judgment and practice vary from the truth pleaded for, will contend, that this term Seed is to be understood in a restrained sense, as only intended of one or more of *Abraham's* immediate Children, to the excluding of the rest, and that it is not to be extended to all indefinitely. But yet, I
D suppose,

Suppose, they are not agreed among themselves, which to assign as the proper Subjects of this Promise ; some have denied *Isaac* to be the seed or part of the seed here intended ; others, and I suppose the major part of our opposers, deny that *Ishmael* was intended , or ought to be accounted as part of the seed here spoken of : As for those that judge *Isaac* was not intended in this Promise, the only ground they go upon, for ought I have yet met with , is this Supposition, viz. That God made a twofold Covenant with *Abraham* and his Seed , the one a legal or temporal Covenant, consisting only in temporal promises, and requiring only an external obedience ; the other a Covenant of Grace, consisting of spiritual promises, and requiring internal and spiritual obedience ; and they conceive, that this Covenant entred with *Abraham* and his Seed , mentioned *Gen. 17. 7.* was only a legal or temporal Covenant ; and that the Covenant of Grace is that formerly spoken of, *Gen. 12. 3.* and again re-established with *Isaac* at the nineteenth verse of this seventeenth Chapter : And then the Objection that the persons of this perswasion raise against our Proposition in the sense given, is to this purpose : That this term Seed is not to be understood in that extensive sense given of it, in as much as this Covenant, mentioned in this seventh verse, was only a temporal or legal Covenant established with *Abraham*, as a natural Father , and his fleshly seed, and not the Covenant of Grace, established with him, as a spiritual Father, and with his spiritual

spiritual seed ; now *Isaac* being a Child of promise, and consequently to be accounted of *Abraham's* spiritual seed , could not be intended in that promise, which alone intended his fleshly or natural seed.

Ans^w. I answer, That *Isaac* in particular was intended in this Promise, and that as a principal Subject of it , as it respected *Abraham's* natural seed, hath been already proved, and as for the Objection now made, it involves the framers of it in such absurdities and contradictions, and supposing it granted, would so little advantage the cause, the promotion of which is in the ultimate design of it aimed at, that it needs no reply at all ; I shall therefore only in a direct opposition to that Supposition, this Objection is grounded upon, affirm, that there was but one Covenant established between God and *Abraham*, and his seed, and that was a Covenant of Grace, and the very same for substance that believers are now under, and consequently that that Promise in *Gen. 12. 3.* was either a branch of this Covenant, or rather the very same promise with this, under consideration, expressed in other terms. And that that Covenant mentioned verse 19. is the same with this mentioned ver. 7. There are several branches of this general Assertion: As,

First, That there was but one Covenant made and established between God and *Abraham*, with reference to himself and his seed, I do not say,

that there was but one Covenant made with the seed of *Abraham*; understanding that term Seed of his Race or Posterity in following ages, but I say, there was but one established with *Abraham*, wherein himself, in common with his Seed, was concerned; now this appears from the constant phrase of Scripture alwayes, where speaking of the Covenant made with *Abraham*, speaking in the singular number, the Covenant, and not in the plural, Covenants.

Secondly, I say, this was a Covenant of Grace.

Thirdly, That it was the very same Covenant for substance that Believers are now under.

Fourthly, That that Promise, *Gen. 12. 3.* is one branch of the Covenant now established with *Abraham* and his Seed, or rather the same Promise with this mentioned, in our first Proposition expressed in different terms; these things I shall speak to hereafter, and the truth of them will, I doubt not, fully appear by the proof of the second Proposition, and therefore I shall say nothing to them at present.

Lastly, That the Covenant mentioned verse 19. is the very same mentioned verse 7. this is sufficiently evident to any that will but read the whole Chapter. In the former part of the Chapter, we read how God promiseth to establish his

Covenant

Covenant with *Abraham* and his Seed in their generations, for an everlasting Covenant, that is, to endure while *Abraham* should have a Seed upon earth : Now at verse 19. the Lord shews *Abraham*, in which of his Seed, and his Line, or posterity this Promise should take place, and have its accomplishment, and that was *Isaac*. Therefore observe how the Text runs, *And God said, Sarah shall bear thee a Son, and I will establish my Covenant with him.* Mark, here is no intimation of any other Covenant, different from that before mentioned ; he doth not say, I will also make, or I will establish a Covenant, or another Covenant, but *I will establish my Covenant* : What Covenant ? Doubtless that before entred in with *Abraham*, with reference to his Seed in their generations ; and this limitation of the Covenant, as afore made and established, with *Abraham*, in reference to his Seed in their generations, unto *Isaac* alone, doth plainly imply, that in the first establishment of it, *Abraham's* whole Seed, as immediately proceeding from his own loins, were included and intended ; for what need an explanatory limitation of it, in regard of the establishment thereof, for an everlasting Covenant to *Isaac* and his Seed, had it not been more comprehensive in the first promulgation of it ; and it is as if the Lord should say, Though I have entred Covenant with thee, and thy Seed after thee, in their generations, for an everlasting Covenant, and have received and taken in thy whole Seed, as proceeding immediately from thine own loins, universally and

indefinitely one as well as another , into a Covenant relation , together with thee with my self, yet my meaning is, not that this Covenant-relation between me and thy Seed, shall be continued in each of their respective lines, throughout their respective generations ; but it is with *Isaac* that I will establish my Covenant , and with his Seed, as the person in whom , and in whose Seed, my Covenant shall take place, and be accomplished ; though thy whole Seed be intended in the Promise , as the next and immediate Subjects of it , yet the Promise in the full latitude and extent of it , as it runs to Seed in their generations, for a Promise to continue successively throughout all generations , shall only take place and receive its full accomplishment in *Isaac* and his Line : But not to spend time upon this, that *Isaac* was intended in this Promise is evident beyond all rational contradiction , and that is all at present I contend for.

Object. 2. Secondly, Others, and I suppose, vastly the major part of our opposers in the main truth pleaded for , conceive that it was *Isaac* alone intended as the only Subject of that Promise, and consequently that *Ishmael*, and the other children of *Abraham*, were excluded from any right or title to it : And there are three Objections made against our extending that Promise, to the including and taking in *Ishmael*, and the Sons of *Abraham* by *Keturab* , as the joynt Subjects with *Isaac* of it.

First,

First, Say some, as God promised to be a God to *Abraham* and his Seed, so he promised the Land of *Canaan* for an everlasting possession to that Seed, to whom he promised to be a God; but the Land of *Canaan* was never given to, nor intended for, either *Ishmael*, or any of *Abraham's* other Children by *Keturah*, or any of their Seeds, and therefore certainly neither *Ishmael*, nor any of *Abraham's* Seed by *Keturah*, could be intended in that Promise; for do we think that God would promise that which he never intended to give? or shall we think that God would promise the Land of *Canaan* to all *Abraham's* Seed, and yet never mind his promise after, nor regard to make good what he had promised.

Ans^w. To that I answer two things.

First, That, in that any of *Abraham's* Seed did not actually possess the Land of *Canaan*, nor in that God intended not that they should possess it, it is no Argument they were not intended in, as the Subjects of, this grand Promise, wherein God ingaged to be a God to them in their generations: This is evident, because some, who were undoubtedly the Subjects of this Promise, never did, nor was it intended by God, that they should actually possess that Land; *Abraham* himself, who was the prime and principal party in this Covenant, according to the letter of it, and consequently the undoubted Subject of this Promise, as referring to himself, never had, nor was it intended by God, that he should have the actual possession of this

Land ; so for *Isaac* and *Jacob*, Heirs with him of the same Promise, they never had, nor was it Gods intendment they should have, the actual possession of that Land. But

Two things are replied to this.

First, Though they did not possess it in their own persons , yet in their posterity they did ; their posterity had the actual possession of it, and God gave it unto them only as a reversion, to be possessed by their Children , when the sin of the Inhabitants was full.

To that I answer, It is certain all their posterity did not possess it , witness the whole race and posterity of *Isaac* descended by *Esan*.

But you will say, Yet some of their posterity did possess it, and that was enough to verifie the Promise unto them, considering under what notion it was promised, *viz.* as afore expressed, a reversion to be enjoyed by their posterity.

To that I answer, It is true, and so for what appears, the posterity of any or of all of *Abraham*'s other Children, should have had the joynt possession with *Isaac* and *Jacob*'s posterity , had not their Fathers forfeited their own and their posterities right and title to the Promise , and their not inheriting, through an antecedent forfeiture of the Promise, is no evidence that their first Parents , as immediately proceeding from *Abraham*, were not intended either in that

or the former grand Promise of the Covenant.

Secondly, It is replied, that though *Abraham*, *Isaac* and *Jacob* did not, nor was it intended by God, that they should in their own persons, at that time, as then upon earth, enjoy the Land of *Canaan*, yet there is a time when they shall have the personal enjoyment of it, they shall arise again, and during the thousand years reign of Christ upon earth, shall have the promise in the very letter made good unto them.

To that I answer, Not to divert to debates excentrical to our present Question, suppose that notion prove true, I would say the same of *Ismael*, and the other Children of *Abraham*, both he and they, with their respective posterities, supposing their not being finally cast out from the Covenant, and the Promises thereof, through their own or their Progenitors sin, shall partake with *Abraham*, *Isaac* and *Jacob* in that their supposed felicity, and therefore neither their not actually possessing, nor Gods intention, that they should not actually possess that Land, will prove, that they were not intended in that grand Promise, their case was no other than the case of several others, who were undoubtedly intended in that Promise.

Secondly, I answer, That the Land of *Canaan* was either a meer temporal good, and the enjoyment of it only a temporal mercy, or else
it

it was a type and pledge of a higher good, viz. of that City that hath foundations, whose Maker and Builder is God; and answerably taking it as a type, it was a spiritual good, and the enjoyment of it a spiritual blessing, and an essential part of the Covenant of Grace, the Land of *Canaan* must be looked upon under the one or the other of these notions, or under both, according to the letter under the former, according to the mystical or typical sense under the latter. Now let our Opposites tell us, how or under what notions they look upon that Land, the subject matter of that Promise: if they say they look upon it under the first notion, namely, as a temporal good, and the Jews possessing of it only as a temporal blessing, then, I say, it was only an appendant, and not pertaining to the essence of the Covenant, and the promise of it only a definite promise, made to *Abraham's* Seed, collectively or generally taken, and answerably the Promise was verified in that any of his Seed, had the possession of it: Indefinite promises, as made to any species or sorts of persons, collectively considered, are equivalent to particular promises, and they are verified, in case only some of that species, or sort of persons, have the good promised: That this promise of the Land of *Canaan*, supposing it to be only a temporal promise, is thus to be taken, is unquestionable from the way and manner of Gods performing of it, had it been a promise to *Abraham* and his Seed, distributively or particularly taken, it must have been made good to each particular

ticular Subject of the promise, both to *Abraham* and all his Seed universally, which it is evident it was not. If they say it was a spiritual promise, or the promise of a spiritual good, a higher and greater good typified by it: then I say, it was of the Essence of the Covenant, and was either in the letter, or in the spiritual sense and meaning of it, performed both to *Abraham* and to all his Seed in their generations, whether *Isaac*, or *Ishmael*, or his Sons by *Keturah*, who did not through a failure in the performance of the condition of the Covenant, loose their right and title to the promise of it; that is, though they had not the good promised it self in the letter, yet they had the good typified by that Land, and principally intended in the Promise: A further proof of this I need not add than the Promise it self considered, in conjunction with the faithfulness of God in the performance of his Promise.

Thirdly, If they will say, they look upon it under both notions, which I conceive is most agreeable to the mind of God in that Promise; then I say as before, 'twas as a temporal promise, only an appendant to the Covenant, as a spiritual promise of the Essence of it, and answerably was made and made good to *Abraham's* Seed, both collectively and distributively taken, in the sense afore opened; from all it evidently appears, that in that neither *Ishmael*, nor the Sons of *Keturah*, did, nor was it intended by God, that they should enjoy the Land of *Canaan*,

naan, it will not follow, that they were not intended in that grand Promise, wherein God ingageth himself, to be a God to *Abraham* and his Seed in their generations, they might be intended in that Promise, and yet not actually enjoy that Land promised, as many others, who were undoubtedly intended in the former Promise, yet never actually in the letter enjoyed the good of that Promise.

Object. 2. Say others, If *Ishmael* were intended in this Promise, and received as one of *Abraham's* Seed into his Covenant, why doth *Abraham* pray so earnestly for him, *Gen. 17. 18*? Doth not his praying so earnestly for him, at least, strongly intimate, he had no right to, or interest in the Covenant afore established with *Abraham*, with reference to his Seed? If *Ishmael* was under the promise of having God a God to him, what need *Abraham* pray so earnestly that he might live before God?

Answer. I answer, May not a promised good be prayed for? Or may not a father pray that his child may live, grow up, and enjoy the good of promises relating to this life, and give comfortable discoveries of his interest in the Promises of the Covenant? Who can question, but that he may? But the true reason of *Abraham's* prayer for *Ishmael*, was an intimation given by God; in those promises made with reference to that child to be born of *Sarah*, of what is more plainly after expressed, that he should

should be the special Child, in whom, and in whose line the Seed should be called, that is, with whom and with whose Seed the Covenant should be established, according to the full extent and latitude of the promises of it, but this is no intimation at all, much less a conclusive Argument, that *Ishmael* was not at present taken into Covenant, and intended in the Promises of it, as one of the immediate Subjects thereof.

Object. 3. And that which by most of our Opposites is especially insisted upon, is a supposed inconsistency between what is affirmed in this our first Proposition, *viz.* That God in this grand Promise of the Covenant intended all *Abraham's* natural Seed universally and indefinitely, one as well as another, as the next and immediate Subjects of it, considering what the sacred Story relates of *Ishmael* in particular, one of *Abraham's* Seed, affirmed by us to be intended in that Promise, and other Principles and Assertions constantly maintained by us, who ground the infant-seed of believing parents right to and interest in the Covenant, upon this its first establishment with *Abraham* and his Seed in their Generations; these Principles and Assertions, with which what is affirmed of all *Abraham's* natural Seed, and of *Ishmael* in particular, is supposed to be inconsistent, are more especially these two,

First, That that Covenant, now established
with

with *Abraham*, was a Covenant of Grace, and the very same for substance with that under which Believers are under the Gospel administration.

Secondly, That the Covenant of Grace is an immutable and unchangeable Covenant, a Covenant that cannot be broken, a Covenant from a standing in which none can fall. Now it is objected, That if it be true as we affirm, that this Covenant, now established with *Abraham* and his Seed, was the Covenant of Grace, and that *Ishmael* in particular was intended in this Promise, and answerably taken into this Covenant with *Abraham*, as one of his Seed there intended, then the Covenant of Grace must be granted to be a mutable and changeable Covenant, a Covenant that may be broken, contrary to our other principles, seeing it is evident, and granted by us, that in case *Ishmael* was ever in this Covenant, he did break it, and was cast out of it, and was disinherited of the promise contained in it; and if so, then it will follow, contrary to what we elsewhere affirm, that a man may be in the Covenant of Grace to day, and cast out to morrow, and then may be in again within a few days after, and yet cast out again, and in the close finally perish. Now it is said, How can Principles or Assertions, lying in such a diametrical opposition one to another, be all true? Therefore sure we must either grant, that *Ishmael* was not intended in this Promise, and consequently not one of this Seed of *Abraham*,
with

with whom, in conjunction with *Abraham* himself, God never entred Covenant, or else that Covenant was not the Covenant of Grace, under which Believers now are, or else that the Covenant of Grace is mutable, and may be broken; that persons may be in it, and after cast out and dispossessed of that good they had sometimes a Covenant-right and title to.

Before I return a direct Answer to this Objection, I shall premise, that this Objection is urged by our Opposites to a twofold end or purpose.

First, It is urged by some, to disprove or overthrow what we affirm of this Covenant, now established with *Abraham* and his Seed, viz. That it is the Covenant of Grace, the same for substance that Believers in Gospel-times are under. Say they, This Covenant made with *Abraham*, and his natural Seed, might be broken, but the Covenant of Grace cannot be broken; one might be in that Covenant to day, and cast out to morrow; witness *Ishmael*, who though taken into Covenant, yet was soon cast out again; but it is otherwise with the Covenant of Grace, and the persons admitted into it, that is, a Covenant that cannot be broken, persons once in that Covenant are never cast out again; and therefore this could not be a Covenant of Grace, but a legal Covenant, as some call it, a temporal Covenant, as others.

Secondly,

Secondly, It is urged by others, in a way of opposition to what is affirmed concerning *Ishmael's* being intended in this Promise, and consequently received into Covenant with *Abraham*: These grant that this was a Covenant of Grace, and hold with us, that the Covenant of Grace of Grace is a Covenant that cannot be broken. Now say they, it is ridiculous to affirm, that *Ishmael* was in this Covenant, seeing it is certain he never enjoyed the good promised, which he should undoubtedly have done, had he been taken in as a party in it. The Covenant of Grace, say they, infallibly secures the good promised in it to all that have admission into it; it is a Covenant that is immutable, those that are once in it are never cast out, but shall infallibly enjoy the good promised: but *Ishmael* enjoyed not the good promised in this Covenant; therefore it is ridiculous to say, he was ever taken into it. So that we may see our Opposites are not agreed among themselves, some granting that *Ishmael* was intended in that Promise, and consequently that he was a party in that Covenant, but deny that that Covenant was a Covenant of Grace: Others granting, that that was a Covenant of Grace, but deny *Ishmael* to be a party in it, whence it appears, that in all these three Assertions, viz. that *Ishmael* was intended in that Promise; that the Covenant, in which the Promise is contained, is a Covenant of Grace. That the Covenant of Grace cannot be broken, we have the suffrage of some of our Opposites, as they are taken severally.

But

But you will say, They all agree, they cannot be all true taken conjunctively : It is true, they do so ; and where their mistake lies, either as to what we affirm , or as to the truth it self , shall be now considered.

First, And I shall first shew in what sence we hold and maintain the Covenant of Grace, to be an immutable and unchangeable Covenant, a Covenant that cannot be broken.

Secondly ; Lay down some Propositions for the vindicating the truth asserted in this first Proposition, for carrying any appearance of repugnancy to that Principle held and maintained by us , in the sence it is held and maintained by us , concerning the immutability of the Covenant of Grace.

For the first : and thus we must observe a twofold distinction.

First, We must distinguish between an external and visible, and an internal and invisible being in Covenant , or between the Covenant of Grace, as externally and visibly, and as internally and invisibly plighted, or mutually entered between God and men ; that there is an external and visible being in Covenant , or that there is an external and visible plighting , or mutual entering of Covenant between God and men, where yet there is not an internal and invisible being in Covenant, nor any internal mutual entering

tring Covenant between God and men ; is evident through the whole Scripture. and is so demonstratively proved by others, especially Mr. *Cobbett* of *New-England*, that it is wholly superfluous to add any thing, I shall therefore only say, that unless we do grant this distinction, we must hold, that either Christ hath no visible Body, Church, or People in the World, or else that some may be of the visible Body, Church or People of Christ, who yet are not in any sence in the Covenant of Grace; the former sure none will affirm, and the granting the latter will grant what I contend for, as will appear in the process of our discourse.

Secondly, We must distinguish between being in Covenant, through a personal acceptation of the terms of the Covenant, and ingaging with God in a Covenant way, and being in Covenant, by vertue of the gracious tenour of the Covenant it self, as made with *Abraham* and his Seed in their generations; that there is a being in Covenant by a personal acceptation of the terms of the Covenant, and ingaging with God in a Covenant way, will be denied by none; and that there is a being in Covenant, or being under the promises of the Covenant, by vertue of the gracious tenour of the Covenant it self, will I hope sufficiently appear from the proof of this and our next Proposition. Now when we say, the Covenant of Grace is an immutable and unchangeable Covenant, a Covenant that cannot be broken, we intend it of the Covenant as personally,

sonally, and that intirely and sincerely entred by a truly regenerate Soul, and not of the Covenant as only externally and unsincerely entred by Hypocrites, nor of the Covenant as made with believing Parents, with reference to their natural Seed; and the meaning of what is affirmed concerning the immutability and unchangeableness of the Covenant of Grace is only this, that when once a Soul is savingly wrought upon, to a rightly closing in with Christ, and a saving closing with the terms of the Covenant, that Soul shall never totally and finally fall away, so as to suffer an absolute and total loss of that Grace wrought in it, nor be absolutely cast out of a Covenant state and relation God-ward: whether these promises, upon the warrant of which this immutability and unchangeableness of the Covenant is asserted and maintained, will prove any more, shall be considered, at least so far as concerns my present purpose, by and by. Having then given the sense, in which we hold the Covenant of Grace to be immutable and unchangeable, I proceed to the second thing promised, the Propositions, and they are these.

First, That this Covenant now established between God and *Abraham*, and his Seed in their generations, which I grant, yea affirm, that it was a Covenant of Grace, the same in substance that Believers are still under, was and still is a conditional Covenant: Let not that term *conditional* offend, I intend no more than

what I suppose will on all hands be granted, viz. That as God promised good to *Abraham*, with reference both to himself and his Seed in their generations, so he required the performance of duty as from *Abraham* himself, so from his Seed in their respective generations: In brief thus, this Covenant contained promises of good from God, yet with a restipulation of duty from the parties with whom it was made, and unto whom the promises did appertain; and this is essential to the very being of a Covenant as properly taken: It is true, this term Covenant is variously used in Scripture, sometimes for a bare promise on Gods part, sometimes for the restipulation on mans part, sometimes for the token of the Covenant, but these are improper significations of the word; when it is properly taken, it alwayes signifies a mutual compact between God and man, wherein God ingageth himself by promise to them, and ingageth them to the performance of what himself hath constituted to be their duty: a Covenant in general when properly taken, and consequently this Covenant in particular, which must partake of the general nature of Covenants, every Species must partake of its Genus, being *quiddam complexum*, implying two or more parties covenanting; so two parties covenanted, the giving of some good on the one part, and the return of some performance on the other, and that as indispensably necessary to the preservation of the Covenant inviolate on each part.

Secondly,

Secondly, That this restipulation or condition on *Abraham's* part, did concern him, both as a single person, and as a Parent, standing in a parental relation towards his Seed, taken in as joynt parties with himself into covenant, my meaning is evident, *Abraham* stood in a double capacity, as a single party, with whom God entred covenant, and as a father of children, to whom the promises of the Covenant did in common with himself appertain. Now as *Abraham*, as a single person in covenant, was to accept of, and perform the conditions of the Covenant, he was in that capacity ingaged to by God, so as a parent he had something of duty incumbent upon him, with reference to his Seed, as immediately descending from his own loins, and as his faithful performance of that duty incumbent upon him in his single capacity, so his performing that duty incumbent upon him as a parent, in reference to his Seed, was absolutely necessary in order to his enjoying the good promised, with reference both to himself and his Seed: The truth of this Proposition is evident from these two places of Scripture compared together, *Gen. 17. 1.* and *Gen. 18. 19.* *Walk before me, and be thou perfect,* There was *Abraham's* duty, in reference to himself as a single person, with whom the Covenant was entred; *For I know him, that he will command his Children, and his Household after him, and they shall keep judgment and justice, that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him; that is, that he may be a God to him,*

and his Seed after him : There was *Abraham's* duty, as a Parent and Master of a Family, and under this term *Command* all other duties, subserving or referring to their walking in the way of the Lord, were implied and comprehended. Now saith the Lord, *Abraham will thus command his Children and Household, that the Lord may bring upon him what he hath spoken of him :* Whence it appears, that *Abraham's* performance of his duty towards his Children and Household, was a necessary condition of Gods bringing upon him, or making good to him, what he had promised, in reference to his Children and Household, and that without the performance of that duty he could not expect, according to the true intent and meaning of the Promise, that God should bring that good upon him, or do that good to him: and what is said of *Abraham* is true of all his Seed, supposing them under that double capacity : *Abraham* was to be a pattern to all his Seed, both in priviledges and in duties.

Thirdly, That whatever was the condition or restipulation of the Covenant as made with *Abraham*, was the condition or restipulation required of his natural Seed, and to be actually performed by them in their own persons, so soon as they came to that maturity of age, as rendered them capable thereof, and that as indispensably necessary to the compleating and continuance of their covenant-relation with God, into which they, as *Abraham's* natural Seed,

Seed, were admitted in their infancy; though God was pleased to enter covenant, not only with *Abraham* himself, but with his Seed together with him, and his accepting of the Covenant for himself and them, constituted a covenant-relation between God and *Abraham*; and his Seed, and that covenant-relation was continued during his Seeds infant capacity upon *Abraham's* account, yet when they grew up to a capacity of a personal ingaging with God in a Covenant way, and performing the restipulation required. Now the continuance of that covenant-relation between God and them, indispensably required their personal accepting of, and performing that restipulation or condition, that *Abraham* in their infancy had accepted for them, and their non-acceptance or non-performance of that condition did, *ipso facto*, disanul the Covenant, or forfeit their right to, and interest in it and the promises of it; God stood the longer by vertue of that Promise obliged to be a God unto them; and for them to have supposed the continuance of that covenant-relation between God and them, into which they were afore admitted, and upon that account expected the good promised, without their personal performance of the duty the Covenant did oblige them to, had been a groundless presumption. The truth of this Proposition is evident in part from what hath been already said, and will more fully appear, when I come to the proof of my second Proposition. *Abraham's* commanding his Children and Household to keep the way of

the Lord, in order to that end , namely, their enjoying the good promised necessarily supposeth it ; for why should he command them to keep the way of the Lord, in relation to such an end, if their keeping that way had no necessary reference to that end, but the end had been attained without their keeping that way ; besides, were not this true, there could have been no such thing, as breach of covenant, found among any of *Abraham's* natural Seed , as will be obvious to every ordinary capacity. Before I proceed further, let me note by the way, that this Covenant , now established with *Abraham*, and his Seed in their generations , implied a twofold condition , necessary to be observed in order to Gods making good the promises of it, referring to his Seed.

First, There was a condition incumbent on *Abraham* himself, there was something of duty required of him , with reference to his Seed, viz. that he command them to keep the way of the Lord , as is observed in the foregoing Proposition.

Secondly, There was a condition incumbent upon the Seed , as grown up and become capable of understanding and performing it , that is, That they walk in the way of the Lord ; and supposing that either *Abraham* had failed in his duty, or his Seed in theirs, God had been acquitted of any charge of unfaithfulness to his promise, though the good promised, with reference

rence to his Seed, had never been given in ; God promiseth to be a God to *Abraham's* Seed as well as to himself, yet with this condition, that he instruct and command his Seed , and that they accept of, and perform the duty ingaged to by covenant.

Fourthly , That *Ishmael's* breach of covenant did neither proceed from a failure on Gods part, in making good the Promises made to him, nor consist in his own loosing or falling from inherent Grace, but did wholly lye in his non-performance of that duty required , as indispensably necessary to the compleating and continuance of that Covenant-relation he was admitted into with God , and transgressing those Commands he was obliged to the observation of ; in brief, he fell from a Covenant-state, but not from Covenanted-grace , for that he never had an actual possession of ; so that to affirm, that *Ishmael* was in the Covenant , now established with *Abraham* and his Seed , and that that Covenant was the Covenant of Grace that Believers are still under , notwithstanding his breach of Covenant in the sense now opened, is no way inconsistent with what is affirmed concerning the immutability of the Covenant of Grace, we freely grant, and our Opposites must grant it too , unless they will admit of the absurdities aforementioned verse 12. that persons may be in an external Covenant-state Godward, and yet want the truth of Grace , may loose a Covenant-state, though not loose Covenanted-Grace,

Grace, or fall from a state of Grace. But not to leave any doubt, that may arise in the minds of any, about what hath been said, unsatisfied, I am aware of one Objection, and that not without a seeming weight and strength in it, will be made against what hath been said, and that is this.

Object. It will be said, Doth not the Scripture plainly intimate, if not positively assert, That the Covenant of Grace cannot be broken, no not in the sense in which it is now supposed *Ishmael* did break it, and is not that at least one Characteristical difference between the Covenant of Grace and the first Covenant, and the peculiar excellency, in respect of which the Covenant of Grace doth excel that former Covenant? Hath not God promised to write his Law in the inward parts, and put his fear in the hearts of all that have admittance into this Covenant, as the means to prevent their breach of it? Now it will be said, How could *Ishmael*, or any Child of believing Parents, supposing he was and they are in the Covenant of Grace, fail in performing the conditions of that Covenant, unless God should fail in making good these Promises, which to affirm would be blasphemy, and therefore sure, had he been and were they in the Covenant of Grace, he never had, nor they never would break Covenant, through a failing in performing the conditions of it.

Now to this I answer, That take these Promises as indefinitely laid down, so they are only made to the Church indefinitely as a collective body, and indefinite Promises, as so made, do not infallibly secure the good promised to every individual person externally interested in them.

But you will say, Suppose the truth of this first Proposition, *viz.* That *Abraham's* natural Seed, immediately proceeding from his own loins, were to be looked upon as the Subjects of this Promise, distributively taken, then every one in particular had a real and actual interest in it.

To that I answer, It is true: but consider what hath been already said; the Covenant and Promises of it were conditional, and his not performing the conditions forfeited the good promised.

But you will further say, Are not these promises, of writing the Law in the inward parts, &c. included in that grand Promise, wherein God promiseth to be a God to him and them, and consequently their performance of the condition was virtually included and implied in the Promise it self, and so the Promise did secure their performance of the condition; though the Covenant of Grace hath conditions, yet they are *Conditiones conditionate*, conditions which are themselves promised in the Covenant; hence though the Covenant be not absolutely unconditional, yet it is equivalent thereunto, in as much as the conditions are themselves

selves included in the Promises of the Covenant; and therefore sure if they had been actually under Covenant, their performance of the conditions had been secured by this Promise.

To this I answer two things, That though these Promises do hold forth the main and principle conditions of the Covenant, as Regeneration, Faith, Repentance, and the like, and they should be included in this Promise, of Gods being a God to his people, and though they run in the external tenour of them absolutely, yet they are not absolutely absolute, as I may so speak; they have a subordinate condition, and that is, that the parties concerned in them do faithfully use the means appointed of God, in a subserviency to his working in or bestowing upon them the good promised; this is evident from Ezek. 36. 37. where we have the very same good; though in other terms or phrases, promised; so also in *Prov.* 2. 6. these Promises hold forth what we of our selves cannot attain to or perform; but they suppose, and require our use of means, which, as Mr. Fenner excellently expresseth it, lye between our can and our cannot, and though it is true, a man, while in his natural estate, cannot use the means so, as shall infallibly secure the good promised to himself, yet his not using of them according to what, through the improvement of what ability, whether natural or spiritual, he hath received, he might do, will acquit God from unfaithfulness in denying the good promised.

But

But secondly, I answer, That take the Covenant as externally made and declared to *Abraham*, and his Seed in their generations, as implying a stipulation on Gods part, and a restipulation on mans part, so these Promises of divine teachings, writing the Law in the heart, &c. are not included as essential to this Promise, of Gods being a God to them, but are distinct Promises, made indefinitely, to the Covenant-people of God; in making good of which, God acts according to his Sovereign will and pleasure, in a compliance with his eternal Decrees and Purposes of election and preterition, and answerably, no individual person can lay an actual claim to them, afore they are at least initially or inchoatively fulfilled; Gods being a God to any individual person, doth require and presuppose, that they do for the present, supposing them capable, or for the future, as soon as capable, take God in Christ as their God, which that his Elect shall do, is secured by these Promises; but that every individual person externally in Covenant, and under the Promises thereof shall do, is not secured by them. If any shall affirm, that these Promises are included, as an essential part of the good of that grand Promise of the Covenant, it concerns them to make good what they affirm, and shew how the very same Promise, at least for the substance of it, was made good to the seed of the Jews, and how it came to pass, notwithstanding that Promise, that they never had their hearts truly, circumcised to love the Lord with all their hearts, and all their souls,

as the letter of that Promise, *Dent. 30. 6.* affirms they should. Besides, let it be further noted, that the Covenant-relation stablished between God and the seed of believing Parents, meerly by vertue of the external tenour of the Covenant, is not so full and compleat as that is, which is constituted through a Souls personal acceptation of the Covenant, and actual ingaging with God in a Covenant way; the Covenant in a proper and full sence must be mutual; but so it is not in the case of the Infant-seed of believing parents, their being in covenant is rather a being under a conditional Promise of the good contained in the Covenant, than being properly and compleatly in covenant with God, though in a sence God may, as he is in Scripture said to enter covenant with them, he enters covenant as he makes promise of the good of the Covenant to them, which yet he doth, as I have said, only conditionally, and the compleating of the Covenant-relation between God and them, depends upon their personal acceptance of the terms proposed in it, when they come to ripeness of years.

To put a close to this first subordinate Proposition, by what hath been said, I suppose, the truth asserted in it is sufficiently evident, notwithstanding what may be objected in a way of opposition to it; and I have insisted the longer upon this, because it is the foundation to our whole Structure to be raised, in reference to the confirmation of the truth pleaded for, and the full evidencing of this, will make our way plain to

to the following Propositions, in as much as *Abraham* being the first person with whom the Covenant was, at least in such a latitude, formally and expressly entred, he must needs be the rule, measure, or pattern; according to which the Covenant, in all following Ages, should be entred and continued between God and his Seed, *Primum in unoquoque genere est regula aut mensura ceterorum ejusdem generis.* God did in *Abraham* set a pattern how he would deal in relation to the tenour of his Covenant with all his Seed; and *Abraham* being a Father of all admitted into a Covenant-relation with God. It highly concerns us, rightly to understand and know the terms and tenour of the Covenant, as made with him, in reference to us who are his Seed; it being made with his Seed in the same tenour, and upon the same terms generically considered, as it was with him, he was the great pattern, as I have said, both of priviledges and duties to his whole Seed, as will appear more fully in our second Proposition, which I now proceed to.

CHAP. IV.

The second subordinate Proposition laid down. How to be understood, declared: The first way of its confirmation, viz. the tenour of the Promise, as at first made to Abraham, proposed and prosecuted. Objections answered.

Object. 1.

SOME object, That the Promise, wherein God engaged to be a God to *Abraham* and his Seed, cannot in that latitude and extent be settled upon and confirmed to believing Gentiles; because that Covenant Believers are now under, is a Covenant wholly divers from that established with *Abraham*; and when the Covenants are divers, the good covenanted cannot be one and the same, at least the Subjects of the one cannot lay claim to the good of the other, by vertue of that Covenant they are under: hence a Believer, as a Believer, that is, as *Abraham's* Spiritual Seed, could not lay claim to the old Covenant-promises, if not descended from *Abraham* by *Isaac* after the flesh; so a Believers fleshly seed, take it either of *Abraham*, or any other Believer, cannot lay claim to the New Covenant Promises, unless
born

to the following Propositions, in as much as *Abraham*, being the first person with whom the Covenant was, at least in such a latitude, formally and expressly entered, he must needs be the rule, measure or pattern, according to which the Covenant, in all following Ages, should be entered and continued between God and his Seed. *Primum in unoquoque genere est regula aut mensura ceterorum ejusdem generis.* God did in *Abraham* set a pattern how he would deal in relation to the tenour of his Covenant with all his Seed; and *Abraham* being a Father of all admitted into a Covenant-relation with God. It highly concerns us, rightly to understand and know the terms and tenour of the Covenant, as made with him, in reference to us who are his Seed; it being made with his Seed in the same tenour, and upon the same terms generically considered, as it was with him; he was the great pattern, as I have said, both of priviledges and duties to his whole Seed, as will appear more fully in our second Proposition, which I now proceed to.

CHAP. IV.

The second Subordinate Proposition laid down. How to be understood, declared.

The first way of its confirmation, viz. the tenour of the Promise, as at first made to Abraham, proposed and prosecuted. Objections answered.

The Second Proposition.

THAT the same Promise that God made unto Abraham, with reference to himself and his natural Seed, is by God himself; and that in the same latitude and extent given to, and settled upon believing Gentiles: The Promise runs in the same tenour, both in regard of extent and limitations, to Abrahams Seed, whether natural or mystical, that it ran in to Abraham himself; it is continued to the Seed, as it was first established with their Father. Only for the preventing mistakes let it be noted, That Abraham had some prebeminency above any of his Seed, as it was meet the Father should have something of prebeminency above his Children. Abraham had a twofold prebeminency.

First,

First, He had a preheminence in point of pater-
 nity or fatherhood ; he was not only a na-
 tural Father of natural Children , as any of his
 Seed may be ; but he was constituted a mysti-
 cal Father , to all that should in after ages
 be admitted into the same Covenant with
 himself, whether Jews or Gentiles , *Rom.*
 4. 11.

Secondly, He had a preheminency in regard
 of his natural Seed, Race or Posterity. He had
 a threefold preheminency in regard of his natu-
 ral Seed.

First, In their multiplication. God never
 multiplied the Seed of any Believer as he mul-
 tiplied the natural Seed of *Abraham*.

Secondly, In their segregation or separation
 from other people, and their incorporation to-
 gether as one Nation, Body politick, or Com-
 monwealth.

Thirdly, In Gods singling them out as the
 special Subjects of his Kingdom, and vouch-
 sasing unto them his Covenant, with the bene-
 fits, priviledges, and blessings thereof, in so ge-
 neral and extensive a way, as he hath done, and
 will yet do. His Church or spiritual Kingdom,
 under the first Testament, consisted in a special
 manner of *Abraham's* natural Race or Poste-
 rity, and he will again take his natural Posterity,
 as the people who in a special manner shall

injoy the good things of the Covenant of Grace, as yet to be administred in the world : This twofold prehemineny we grant that *Abraham* had above any of his Seed, whether natural or mystical : But yet take *Abraham* as a natural Father, accepting of the Covenant God made with him, and so the same Promise, that was given unto him, is given and settled upon his whole Seed, and consequently (which only falls under our present consideration) is given to, and settled upon believing Gentiles. The truth of this Proposition I shall (the Lord assisting) evidence four ways.

First, From the tenour of the Promise made to *Abraham*, with reference to his Seed, at the first establishment of the Covenant between God and him; and here we must have recourse to what hath been already said, for the explication of this Promise. The sum of all is this; That when God promised *Abraham* to be a God to him, and his Seed in their generations, his meaning was, that he would be a God both to *Abraham* and his whole Seed, as before explained in their respective generations; that is, to them and their respective Children, descending immediately from their own loins; yet so, as that their interest in the Promise, and enjoyment of the good promised, should be continued and vouchsafed to them upon condition of their walking in the steps of the faith and obedience of their Father *Abraham*; and consequently, that the Promise did not actually appertain ei-
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ther to any of *Abraham's* natural Race or Posterity, beyond his Children immediately descending from him, or to any of his Seeds, Races, or Posterities, beyond their immediate Children, included with them in that phrase, *their Generations*, by vertue of that their remote relation unto them. Now then all that I have to do for the proving the settlement of this Promise, in the same extent and latitude upon believing Gentiles, in which it was given to *Abraham* himself, by the tenour of the Promises as now made to *Abraham*, is to prove, that this is the true sence and meaning of this Promise, as made to him with reference to his natural Seed, for look as the Promise was to be understood as referring to his natural Seed, so it is to be understood as referring to his mystical Seed, in as much as both are equally and alike intended in the Promise, as at first made unto *Abraham*, both his natural and mystical Seed standing in one and the same capacity respective to the Promise, and therefore as it ought to be interpreted as it had reference to the one, so it ought to be interpreted as referring to the other. Now that this Promise, as referring to *Abraham's* natural Seed, was to be interpreted and understood in the extent and latitude, and yet with the limitations before expressed, I shall make good by these two or three Arguments.

First, That must needs be the true sence and meaning of this Promise, which alone is consistent with the truth and faithfulness of God

in performing it : But that sence and meaning, which is given according to the extent and limitations afore expressed, is only consistent with the truth and faithfulness of God in performing it : Therefore that sence and meaning must be the alone true and genuine sence and meaning of it , and answerably is so to be interpreted and understood by us. That we ought to interpret and understand the Promises of God in such a sence and meaning, as is consistent with his truth and faithfulness in performing them , and when there is but one sence and meaning consistent with the truth and faithfulness of God , that that must be the alone true sence and meaning, sure none will deny. God is a true and faithful God , a God that cannot lye, not only will not, but cannot lye ; therefore that sence and meaning put upon his Promises , which is consistent with his truth and faithfulness in performing them , cannot possibly be the true sence and meaning of them. Now that the sence and meaning put upon this Promise , according to the extent and latitude, and with the limitations before expressed, is alone consistent with the truth and faithfulness of God in performing it, will be evident, by shewing the inconsistency of any other sence and meaning possibly to be put upon it, with the truth and faithfulness of God in performing it. And for this let us a little inquire what other sence and meaning can possibly be put upon this Promise, and I suppose the only sence and meaning that will be attempted to be put upon it , will be this , *viz.*

That

That when God promised to *Abraham*, with reference to his Seed, to be a God unto them in their generations, his meaning was only this, That he would be a God to each of them in their respective ages or generations wherein they should live; and so by this phrase, *In their generations*, we are to understand only each particular or individual person of *Abraham's* Seed, as subsisting in their respective ages or generations, and not as including Parents and Children.

Now let us a little pursue this sense and meaning, and see whether it be consistent with the truth and faithfulness of God in his Promises. And here let it be remembered, that *Abraham's* natural Seed must necessarily be primarily intended in this Promise, as the first and immediate Subjects of it; this hath been already proved, and therefore I shall take it for granted at present. And it must further be considered, that though *Abraham's* natural Seed, as immediately descending from his own loins, were firstly intended, as the primary Subjects of this Promise; yet it had a further respect, *viz.* to his whole natural Race and Posterity, as immediately descending from him, in succeeding ages; this is evident, as from other Scriptures, so from this very phrase, *their generations*; and besides, the whole Context evidently declares it. In *Gen. 15. 16.* it evidently appears, that God intended not, that *Abraham's* Seed should possess the Land of *Canaan* till the fourth generation; yet it is promised to the Seed intended

in this Promise, that they should have the Land of *Canaan*, and that for an everlasting possession : So that when God promised to be a God to *Abraham*, and his Seed, though he intended his own immediate Children, yet he had a further respect to his natural Race and Posterity, as mediately descending from him.

Now let it be considered, how it was consistent with the truth and faithfulness of God in his Promises, to promise to *Abraham*, to be a God to him, and his Seed, both immediately and mediately descending from him, seeing it is certain he was not a God to all his Seed, no not so much as in an external and outward way ; for when *Ishmael* was cast out of *Abraham's* Family, and together therewith, or thereby, out of the Covenant, God ceased to be a God to any of his Race or Posterity, unless by their personal acceptance of the Covenant, they became again incorporated into the Church of the Jews, as any other Heathen might be : and the like is true of *Esaú's* Race and Posterity ; so for the whole body of the Jewish Nation at this day, there is a cessation of any actual Covenant-relation between God and them. Now how could God cast off so great a part of *Abraham's* Seed from being his people, and how could he cease to be a God to them, and yet remain faithful to his Promise, in case this be the sense and meaning of it ? Yes, it may be some will say, the truth and faithfulness of God may be vindicated two ways,

First, It may be vindicated by the consideration of the nature of this Promise: It was, as you your selves grant, an indefinite Promise made to *Abraham's* Seed collectively taken, and so was verified, in the performance of it to some of his Seed, though it was not performed universally to every individual person of his Seed.

But to this I reply two things.

First, That this Promise, according to the sense and meaning contended for by my Opposers, cannot be an indefinite Promise to *Abraham's* Seed, collectively taken, but must needs be a definite Promise to his Seed, distributively taken; for that is the sense and meaning contended for, That God promised to be a God to *Abraham*, and each of his Seed in their respective ages or generations. Now, according to this sense, this term *Seed*, must needs be taken distributively, as meant of every one of *Abraham's* Seed: So that whenever, in any generation, *Abraham* had one born unto him, as one of his Seed, the Promise did reach and take in him, or her, as so born unto him, as one of the Subjects intended in it. If it had been only said to *Abraham*, to thee and to thy Seed, it might have been an indefinite Promise to his Seed, collectively taken; but when 'tis added, in their generations, according to this sense it must needs be a definite Promise made to his Seed, distributively or singularly taken; and consequently, Gods not being a God unto any
of

of his Seed, had been a breach of this Promise, as made unto *Abraham*, with reference to his Seed.

Secondly, I answer; Though the Promise were an indefinite Promise made to *Abraham's* Seed, collectively taken, yet none ever did, or ever should fail of enjoying the good promised, supposing there had been no failure in performing the condition of it, either by the parties themselves, or by their next or remote Progenitors.

Secondly, It may be it will be said; The Promise was made conditionally, and *Abraham's* Seed failing in the performance of the conditions, disobliged God from making good the Promise to them.

To that I reply; That it is readily granted, that this Covenant, and the Promises thereof, was made to *Abraham* and his Seed conditionally: But observe it, according to the sense and meaning pleaded for by our Opposers, every Child of any Jew, or of any of *Abraham's* Posterity, must be in the eye of this Promise accounted as one of *Abraham's* Seed, and as so related unto him, be intended in it as one of the Subjects of it; And how can a Child forfeit its right to a Promise before it is born? So that suppose that the immediate Father had failed in the condition of the Promise, and thereby deprived himself of an interest in it, yet he could

not forfeit the Childs right, in as much as if this sense were true, the Child received not its right from the next Parent, but from *Abraham* himself, one of whose Seed this Child is; and hence it will unavoidably follow, that either the whole Race and Posterity of *Abraham*, at least in their infancy, before an actual forfeiture made by themselves, must be under this Promise, and consequently in a Covenant-relation with God, or else God hath failed in making good his Promise; neither of which those that contend for this sense will affirm; therefore this sense and meaning must unavoidably be relinquished, and there being no other sense and meaning imaginable, we must necessarily adhere to that afore-given. And indeed should we not understand this Promise in the extent and latitude, and with those limitations before expressed; one of those absurdities will necessarily follow: for if, so be we should understand it of all *Abraham's* natural Seed, universally, both immediately and mediately descending from him; God must either be their God, or fail in his Promise, they receiving their right to, and interest in the promises, not from their immediate parents, as included with them in that phrase, *their generations*, but from *Abraham* himself; which right and interest they could not loose by the sin of any intermediate parent, they being, notwithstanding the sin of such a parent, still *Abraham's* Seed. And it being impossible, that they themselves, afore they are born, should forfeit their own right to it; and if we should grant, that parents and
children

children were included in that phrase, *their generations*, and not limit the the promise to particular generations of *Abraham's Seed*, that is, to parents and their immediate children, the same absurdity will follow; for then the Seed of the Jews, who in their own persons forfeited their own right, would yet have a right to it, by virtue of the promise, as made to their progenitors in one or more generations past; and if so be the natural Seed of *Abraham* should convey a right to the promise, merely as such, *viz.* as *Abraham's* natural Seed, without consideration had to their own abiding in Covenant, still the same absurdities will follow; either the Infants-seed of the Jews must still be under the promise, or God is not faithful to his promises, neither of which will be affirmed (as I judge) by our Opposers. Now then this being the true sence and meaning of this promise, the truth pleaded for is past all question evident, *viz.* That as God promised *Abraham*, with reference to his natural Seed, immediately descending from him, that he would be a God to him, and them in their generations; so with reference to his mystical Seed, *viz.* Believing Gentiles, that he would be a God to him and them in their generations, the promise being made to *Abraham's* whole Seed, whether natural or mystical, that God would be a God to them in their generations; and surely believing Gentiles are *Abraham's* Seed, as well as his Children proceeding from his own loins, as shall be evidenced more fully by and by. But that is the first Argument,

ment, to prove that the sence and meaning given, according to the extent, and latitude, and the limitations afore expressed, is the true and genuine sence and meaning of this promise.

Argum. 2. My second Argument is this, God in his consequent transactions and dealings with the Seed of *Abraham*, in reference to covenant-ingagements between him and them, hath expounded that Promise, according to the sence and meaning afore given; then that must needs be the true sence and meaning of it: but the former is true, therefore the latter. Sure if the after dealings of God with the Seed of *Abraham* do declare the sence and meaning of that Promise to be as we have afore given it, we need not doubt but 'tis the true and genuine sence and meaning of it; we cannot doubt but that God fully understands his own sence and meaning in that, as well as in all other his promises; we may well interpret promises as God himself doth, whether he do it in his Word or by his Works: Now that God hath expounded this promise, according to the sence and meaning before given, is evident from that of *Deut.* 29. 10, 11, 12, 13. For observe it, when God deals with *Abraham's* Seed, in reference unto Covenant engagements between him and them, he takes in not only Parents, but their Infant-Seed with them, and that as the accomplishment of this very promise. God now enters Covenant with the whole Congregation, in that extent

extent and latitude that he promised to *Abraham*, that he would be a God to his Seed in their generations, including Parents and Children; he did not only enter Covenant with the Parents, as he had before promised to *Abraham*, to be a God to him and his Seed, but he enters Covenant with their Children: that is, he enters Covenant with them in their generations; and his entering Covenant with these Children or Infants, could not be, as they were, of the natural Race and Posterity of *Abraham*, for the Reasons before given; for if that promise engaged God to enter Covenant with, or extend his Covenant to the Infants of these particular Parents, upon the account of their relation to *Abraham*; as of his Seed, there would be the same reason of continuing this Covenant-relation between himself and all *Abraham's* natural Race and Posterity, while in their infancy, which he hath not done; and therefore he must needs take them now in upon the account of their immediate parents, by virtue of this promise, wherein he engaged himself to be a God to *Abraham*, and his Seed in their generations: Besides, he enters Covenant not only with the natural Seed of *Abraham*, but with the Strangers then amongst them, and with their Seed, the Children of Strangers being still admitted into Covenant together with their parents: So that the manner of his now entering covenant with these particular Parents and Children at this time, as a clear and express explication of that phrase, wherein the promise was first made

to *Abraham*, with reference to his Seed, viz. That God would be a God to them in their generation, And as the Covenant was entered in this extent and latitude, in which the promise was at first made, so with the same limitations, as is evident from the Commination denounced against him that should apostatize to Idolatry, compare the twentieth with Chapter the thirteenth, verse the twelfth and thirteenth; The Seed of Idolaters was to be destroyed with the parents themselves, which could not have been, in case the promise had extended beyond the immediate Children: so that we have God himself expounding the true sence and meaning of this promise, and thus he expounds it in the latitude, and yet with the limitations before expressed.

Argum. 3. My third Argument is this, If the Prophets have interpreted this promise as to be fulfilled in Gospel times, in the extent and latitude before expressed, then we are so to interpret and understand it: but the former is true, therefore the latter.

But this will bring me to the second way proposed, for the evidencing of this our second Proposition, and therefore I shall not stay upon it at present.

From what hath been said it evidently appears, that this promise of the Covenant is to be understood according to the extent and latitude, and yet with the limitations before given; This promise was made to *Abraham's* whole Seed,

Seed, and answerably to his mystical Seed, believing Gentiles, as well as to his natural Seed : Here is no limitation of the promise to either sort or species of *Abraham's* Seed ; 'tis no more limited to his natural than to his mystical Seed, nor to his mystical than to his natural , but is made alike to both sorts of Seed ; whoever bear this relation to *Abraham*, as his Seed, they are the Subjects intended in this promise , or they are under this promise, That God will be a God to them in their generations : Every believing Gentile stands related to *Abraham* , and answerably is to be looked upon in the same capacity, with reference to this promise, as *Isaac* did , though the foundation of the relation be different ; yet the relation it self is one and the same, and the capacity of both , with reference to the Promise , alike , that we may say as the Apostle to something a different purpose , *We Brethren are as Isaac was* , we stand alike related to *Abraham*, as he did, and are the joynt Subjects of the promise with him : so that as God promised to *Abraham* , with reference unto him, that we would be a God to him in his generation, so he promised to *Abraham*, with reference to us believing Gentiles, that he would be a God to us in our generations , that phrase including, as then so still, Parents and Children : and that which gives further evidence to this truth is, that *Abraham's* natural Seed, as grown up, held their own interest, and conveyed an actual right to, and interest, in the promise, to their Children not as they were *Abraham's* natural Seed themselves,

selves, but as they were his mystical Seed (that is) did walk in the steps of his faith and obedience. Now let any man shew any reason why the promise in that extent and latitude should be restrained to *Abraham's* natural Seed , especially they, as grown up, inheriting the promise themselves , and conveying a right to it to their Children, as his mystical Seed, and not as his natural ; I say, let any man shew any solid reason, why the promise in that extent and latitude should be restrained to them, and why the Gentiles should not enjoy it in the same extent and latitude that they did, seeing that God hath promised to be a God to *Abraham* and his whole Seed in their generations ; certainly no rational ground can be given, and therefore we may positively conclude, that this promise, in the full latitude and extent of it , is given and confirmed to, and settled upon believing Gentiles, in the very first making of it unto *Abraham*.

CHAP. V.

The second way of the foregoing Propositions confirmation proposed and prosecuted; where it is proved, that by the Promises and Prophecies of the old Testament, relating to new Testament times, the good contained in this Promise is settled upon, and confirmed to, some under the Covenant of Grace in new Testament times, and that it is no way restrained unto these immediately and directly concerned in these Promises and Prophecies, and consequently must needs be common to all under the same Covenant. The third way of the same Propositions confirmation, where it is proved, that the good contained in the forementioned Promise is, by the express letter of the new Testament, settled upon and confirmed to believing Gentiles; the Scripture wherein that settlement is made produced: Objections of the said settlement answered.

SEcondly, The truth of this our second Proposition is further evident from the Promises
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and Prophecies of the old Testament ; and thus the good contained in this Promise made to *Abram* is, in the extent and latitude before express, given and confirmed to, and settled upon believing Gentiles, by the Promises and Prophecies of the old Testament, referring and relating to new Testament times : And thus we argue, What good is by promise and prophesie given to, and settled upon some under the Covenant of Grace in new Testament times, is by the same promise and prophesie given to, and settled upon all under the same Covenant, unless it be restrained to that some either by the nature and quality of the good it self, or by some express revelation of the will of God ; but this good, *viz.* To have God a God to them and their Infant-seed, is by promise and prophesie given to, and settled upon some under the Covenant of Grace in new Testament times, and is not restrained to that some, either by the nature of the good it self, or by any express revelation of the will of God ; therefore that good must needs by the same Prophecies and Promises be given to, and settled upon all under the same Covenant.

The Major proposition cannot be denied, without utterly razing the foundation of the faith and comfort of all believers. For what is the foundation of the faith and comfort of each particular Believer but this, That what good is promised to any particular Believers, and no wayes restrained to those in particular to whom the Promise was first made, is promised to all that are under the same Covenant with them :

and thus the Apostle directs us to apply Promises made to particular Believers, yea, when there might seem to be some shew of reason to restrain the good promised to those in particular to whom it was immediately made; the Apostle applying that Promise made to *Joshua*, concerning *Gods never leaving nor forsaking him*, to the *Hebrews*, is our sufficient direction in this matter.

For the Minor proposition, that only can be questioned; for the proof of which I shall, the Lord assisting, do these three things.

First, Instance in, and assign the persons, who in new Testament times have by the Promises and Prophecies of the old Testament this good given to, and settled upon them.

Secondly, I shall prove, that 'tis one and the same Covenant of Grace that they are under, as having this good given unto them, and that believing Gentiles in general are under.

Thirdly, That this good is not restrained to them in particular, to whom it is by promise and prophesie given, either of these wayes before mentioned, and consequently not at all.

For the first, And thus I need do no more, but produce such old Testament Promises and Prophecies, as by which this good, of having God a God to them and their Infant-seed, is given to, and settled upon some under the Cove-

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nant of Grace in new Testament times: The persons, or that sort or species of persons intended in them, is sufficiently evident from these Promises and Prophecies themselves. Look into these Scriptures, *Isai.* 59. 21. and 65. 25. and 44. 3, 4. *Jer.* 3. 12: *Ezek.* 37. 21. and 22. and compare all these places with *Rom.* 11. 26. That all these Promises and Prophecies refer to the Jews, as yet to be called and brought home unto Christ, will not be denied by any. And this good, *viz.* To have God to be a God to them, and their Infant-seed with them, is given to, and settled upon them by these Promises and Prophecies, is sure past all rational doubt: If all these Promises and Prophecies, concerning Gods pouring his Spirit upon them and their Seed; concerning his continuing his Word and Spirit in their mouths, from one generation to another; concerning his being a God to all their families, not only of their persons, but families; concerning their Children being as aforetime, and the like; especially the Apostle expounding all these Promises and Prophecies by that universal phrase, *All Israel*, do not sufficiently assure the Jews, that when they are brought home unto Christ, they shall enjoy this good in the latitude and extent express, I see not how we can possibly be sure of any thing held forth by way of promise and prophetic; yea, or how we can be assur'd of any thing past, that is declar'd to us by Scripture-history. Certainly we must wholly despair of understanding any thing God speaks to us in his

Word; if we doubt whether the forementioned Promises and Prophecies do assure the Jews of that forementioned good. Therefore we may positively conclude, having such an abundant, yea, superabundant evidence from Scripture for it, that the Jews, when the veil is taken off from their hearts, and they that turned to to the Lord shall enjoy this good, in the same latitude and extent that their Father *Abraham* did.

Secondly, That it is one and the same Covenant into which the Jews (the persons to whom this good is by these Promises and Prophecies given) shall be received, and believing Gentiles in generations are under; this is evident, past all rational contradiction, by comparing *Jer. 31, 31.* with *Hebr. 8 8.* We plainly see, that the Apostle takes it for granted, that the Covenant that God promises to make with the Jews at their future calling and conversion, is the Covenant now made with believing Gentiles; so that though some, though groundlessly, suppose, that Covenant made with *Abraham* was not the same with that believing Gentiles are now under: yet none can pretend, that the Covenant under which believing Gentiles are, and that to be made with the Jews, at the time forementioned, are different or distinct Covenants. Suppose the Apostle tell us, that God made another Covenant with Believers than that he made with *Israel* of old (then that he made with *Abraham* it is no where said) yet they cannot

cannot say there is the least intimation that God will make another Covenant with the Jews, different from that we are now under. Now then the Covenant being one and the same, the promises of that Covenant are indifferently to be applyed unto all under it : And for the further confirmation of this, let it be observed, that the Apostle doth frequently apply these promises, which are to have their full accomplishment to the Jews, to the Gospel Church under this present administration : compare *Isai.* 54. 1. with *Gal.* 4. 27. That promise in the letter directly respects the Jews, yet the Apostle applyes it, as fulfilled inchoatively, in the conversion of the Gentiles : So compare *Hosea* 1, 11. and 1. 23. with *Rom.* 9. 25, 26. So once again, compare *Amos* 9. 11. with *Acts* 15. 26. So that it is evident, that the Covenant, then to be made with, or into which the Jews shall be received, is the very same with that now made with believing Gentiles, and answerably those promises, that shall have their full accomplishment to the Jews, are applicable to believing Gentiles.

Thirdly, That this good, of having God a God to Parents and their Infant-seed, is not restrained to the Jews, by either of the wayes before mentioned, and consequently not at all : Who can imagine that believing Gentiles should be less capable of injoying this good, than the Jews will be at their conversion ? Why may not God be a God to Believers and their Seed now,

as well as to Believers and their Seed hereafter? Why may not God be a God to a believing Gentile and his Seed, as well as to a believing Jew and his Seed? Can any prove, that believing Gentiles are absolutely incapable of enjoying this good, in the full latitude and extent of it? They will say something to the invalidating of this Argument: Suppose it should be granted (which yet I see no reason for) that the Seed of the Jews will be more capable of being the Subjects of the Covenant and promise thereof, than the Seed of Believers now are; yet unless they prove, that the Seed of Believers are absolutely incapable of being received into, as joynt Subjects with their parents of the Covenant, and promise thereof, they say nothing to the purpose; in as much as whatever difference, in point of capability or incapability, may be assigned between the Seed of Believers then, and the Seed of Believers now, in regard of the different manner of this and that administration, yet that is no reason why we may not apply these promises to believing Gentiles, to have their first accomplishment in and among them, according to the manner of this present administration, as well as the Jews may apply them to themselves, and enjoy the accomplishment of them in a way suitable to that more excellent and glorious administration: and as for the other way of Gods restraining the good of promises to some particular persons, viz. by the express revelation of his will, let any such revelation of the will of God, in the matter under

under consideration, be produced, and I shall put an end to this controverſie; and unleſs this good, in the extent and latitude before expreſt, be ſome way reſtrained to the Jews, we may poſitively conclude, that the promiſe made to *Abraham*, with reference to his Seed, is by the forementioned promiſes and propheſies confirmed to, and ſetled upon believing Gentiles, in the full latitude and extent in which it was given unto *Abraham*, viz. That God will be a God to them in their generations, that is, to them and their Seed. We may lay down this general rule, That whatever Promiſes or Propheſies are given out by the Prophets in the old Teſtament, directly referring and relating to the Jews at their call and converſion; yet unleſs the good contained in them be ſome way reſtrained to them in particular, we may and ought to apply them to the new Teſtament Church, and the particular members of it, under this preſent adminiſtration. The application made by the Apoſtle of Promiſes and Propheſies directly referring unto them, to the new Teſtament Church, and the particular Members thereof is a ſufficient warrant for our ſo doing. As now for inſtance take that promiſe, *Amos 9. 11.* concerning the building up the Tabernacle of *David*, in the letter of it, it hath a direct reference to the future converſion of the Jews, yet we ſee, *Acts 15. 16.* the Apoſtle applies it to the erecting and building up of the Goſpel Church among the Gentiles. Now the Prophet *Jeremiah* tells us, how God will build up this Tabernacle

bernacle of *David*, of and among the Jews; he will do it, by taking in their respective families, which must needs take in Parents and Children into Covenant with himself, *He will be a God to all the families of the house of Israel.* Now let any rational account be given, why we may not apply that promise in *Jeremiah*, expressing the manner of Gods raising up this tabernacle, to his raising it up from among the Gentiles, as well as the Apostle applies that promise it self to the gathering the Church from among them; doubtless no reason, that hath so much as a probable shew of reason or truth in it, can be given.

And whereas it may be said, there are some things spoken in *Jeremiah* 31. which cannot be applied to believing Gentiles.

To that I answer, 'Tis granted: But that hinders not at all, but that what is applicable to them, may and ought to be applied unto them, in that promise, concerning the building up of the Tabernacle of *David*; as it refers to the conversion of the Jews, there is something which is not applicable to the Gentiles: yet that hinders not, but that the promise, so far as applicable to them, was intended of them, and accomplished in the beginning of it, in their conversion: So now God, as being the God of all the families of *Israel*, will, when the Jewish Church cometh up to the fulness of her glory; communicate himself in a more full, glorious, and universal manner, in respect of the individual Members of each family, than now he doth;

doth ; yet that hinders not at all, but that that promise was intended of the families of *Israel*, as gathered from among the Gentiles, as the Apostle calls the Gentile Church, *the Israel of God*, and is begun to be accomplished, according to the true intent of it, under this present administration. But that's for the second way of evidencing the truth of this our second Proposition.

Thirdly, The truth of what we affirm in this second Proposition may be evidenced from the express letter of the new Testament ; this promise made to *Abraham*, and that in the same extent and latitude in which it was made to him, is confirmed to, and settled upon believing Gentiles, by the express letter of the new Testament. Thus in *Galatians* 3. 13, 14. *Christ*, saith the Apostle, *hath redeemed us from the curse of the Law, being made a curse for us, that the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles, through Jesus Christ, that we might receive the Promise of the Spirit through faith*. The Apostle we see here doth positively affirm, that the very end of *Christ*, redeeming the Gentiles from the curse of the Law, was their possessing *Abraham's* blessing, and consequently is the immediate issue and result of a Gentiles redemption or deliverance from the curse of the Law, through *Christ*, as believed in. No sooner is a believing Gentile freed from the curse of the Law, by his faith in *Christ*, but he, as one of *Abraham's* Seed, hath *Abraham's* blessing come upon him: For
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the clearing up the evidence given in to the truth of our foregoing Proposition, by this Scripture I shall do these two things,

First, I shall prove, that this blessing of *Abraham*, said to be come upon believing Gentiles, is that very good contained in that promise, wherein God ingaged himself to be a God to *Abraham*, and his Seed, and remove what Objections may be made to the contrary.

Secondly, I shall prove, that this blessing is come upon the Gentiles, through Christ, in the same latitude and extent that it was given to *Abraham*, at the first establishment of the Covenant with him.

For the first, viz. That this blessing came upon the Gentiles through Christ, is the good contained in the aforementioned promise: This is evident from the Context.

First, From verse 16. where sayes the Apostle, *Now unto Abraham and his Seed were the Promises made; he said not, unto Seeds, as of many, but to thy Seed, which is Christ*: This verse 16. is added for the confirmation of what the Apostle had asserted in verse 14. For the clearing up of this we must observe, that by the promise of the Spirit, in the latter clause of that verse 14. and the blessing of *Abraham*, in the former clause of this verse, one and the same good is intended. 'Tis true, *Beza* conceives two distinct

distinct blessings are intended, and therefore he adds that Copulative, *καὶ ἔτι*, and takes that phrase, *The promise of the Spirit*, by an Hebraism, for the Spirit promised; but that cannot be, for then, as *Pareus* observes, it should not have been, *τὸ ἐπαγγελίαν τὸ πνεῦμα* Ⓞ, the promise of the Spirit, as it is, but *τὸ πνεῦμα τῆς ἐπαγγελίας*, the Spirit of promise: and therefore by the promise of the Spirit we must understand, either that spiritual promise, so *Pareus*, or rather that promise which God by his Spirit gave unto *Abraham*, and which by the inspiration of the Spirit is left upon record in the Scripture, and that is the promise containing the blessing before mentioned; or if any should understand it of the Spirit himself, taking it of his indwelling presence, they shall not be gainsaid by me. And the meaning is this, Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the Law, that we, whether Jews or Gentiles, might receive the promise of the Spirit, (*viz.* that blessing promised to *Abraham* by the Spirit) through faith in Christ, that is, that being united by faith unto Christ, and incorporated into him, as members of his mystical body, we might receive that blessing promised to *Abraham*, and now come upon the Gentiles through Christ: So that that which the Apostle asserts in this ver. 14. is this, that the blessing promised to *Abraham* is come upon the Gentiles, through their incorporation into Christ by faith; and this the Apostle proves in verse 16. by the tenour of the promise wherein the blessing aforementioned is contained: The te-

nour of the promise is this, not, I will be a God to thee and thy Seeds, but to thee and thy Seed, as intending only one species or kind of Seed, which the Apostle expounds to be Christ, that is, Christ myſtical. Now obſerve it, the Apoſtles urging the tenour of the promise, to prove that the bleſſing of *Abraham* is come upon the Gentiles, as he had afore affirmed it to be, in verſe 14. evidently declares, he muſt needs intend the bleſſing contained in that promise; if he had intended it of any other bleſſing than that good given to *Abraham* and his Seed by that promise, the tenour of that promise had not prov'd what he was to prove: ſo that it muſt needs be that bleſſing promiſed to *Abraham*, that the Apoſtle here affirms to be come upon believing Gentiles through Jeſus Chriſt. Now that this promise, by the tenour of which the Apoſtle prov'd what he had ſaid, verſe 14. is this very promise made to *Abraham*, *Gen. 17. 7.* is evident paſt all doubt, in as much as the Apoſtle muſt needs refer to ſome promise made to *Abraham* and his Seed in that very phraſe, *To thee and thy Seed*; the ſtrength of the Apoſtles Argument lying in the manner of expreſſion, *to thy Seed*. Now we have no other promise containing a good competable to the Gentiles, expreſt in that phraſe but this only; ſo that it is evident, that this bleſſing, ſaid to be come upon the Gentiles through Chriſt, is that bleſſing contained in that very promise, wherein God ingaged to be a God to *Abraham*, and his Seed in their generations. As for that promise in *Gen. 12. 3.* there is no mention

mention at all of *Abraham's Seed* ; and for that *Gen. 17. 19.* unto which some seem to suppose the Apostle here hath reference, there is no mention at all of *Abraham's Seed*, as such, but of *Isaac's* ; and besides, 'tis not said to thy Seed, but it is spoken of or concerning his Seed : But now, I say, the Apostle must needs refer to, and intend some promise, wherein this very phrase, *to thy Seed*, is expressly used : The strength of this Argument, as I have said, lying in the manner of expression, there being a mystery in that phrase, implying that the blessing of *Abraham* should not be enjoyed by all that might lay claim to this relation to *Abraham*, as his Seed, but by his Seed which were of the faith, as the Apostle explains it, *Rom. 4. 13.*

Secondly, That the blessing said to be come come upon the Gentiles through Christ, is that blessing contained in that promise of the Covenant, is evident from verse 29 where saith the Apostle, *if ye be Christs, then are ye Abraham's Seed, and heirs according to promise* : Heirs of what ? Why verse 14 tells us, of the blessing of *Abraham* : But heirs according to what promise ? Why verse 16. tells us, that promise made to the Seed of *Abraham* : Now how could they be heirs of that blessing, according to, or by vertue of that promise, unless the blessing they were heirs unto, were the blessing or good contained in that promise ? Can any be heirs to a blessing, according to or by vertue of that promise, in which that blessing is not contained ?

Or

Or can a promise convey a right to that good which is not contained in it ? who can imagine it ? Therefore doubtless the blessing must needs be the blessing, contained in that promise made to *Abraham*, and his Seed in their generations.

Thirdly, That the blessing of *Abraham* said to be come upon believing Gentiles through Christ, is the blessing contained in that promise, is evident from verse 9, where it is said, they that are of the faith are blessed, οὗ τοῦ πατρὸς Ἀβραάμ, with faithful *Abraham*, that is, blessed with the same blessing that *Abraham* was blessed with : Now there is no blessing that *Abraham* was blessed with, that can possibly come upon the Gentiles, but only the blessing contained in this promise, and therefore that must needs be the blessing here intended:

But three things will be objected against our taking this Scripture as an express settlement of *Abraham's* blessing, as it consisted in that promise, of God being a God to him and his Seed, upon believing Gentiles.

First, It will be objected, That this blessing is not meant of that blessing with which *Abraham* himself was blessed, but of that blessing promised to him, with reference to his Seed, which was, that God would be a God to them, as he was to *Abraham* himself.

To this I answer : It is all one, whether we understand it of the blessing promised to *Abraham*, with reference to himself, or with reference to his Seed, in as much as the Promise made to *Abraham* himself, and that made to him with reference to his Seed, is one and the same : What God promised to *Abraham*, viz. That he would be a God to him and his natural Seed, that he promised to his Seed, viz. to be a God to them in their generations ; that is, as before explained, to them and their Seed ; and besides, taking it so, the promise to *Abraham's* natural Seed was, to them in their generations. And in like manner, as the Apostle here affirms, it runs to believing Gentiles, viz. to them in their generations, including Parents and Children : But if we compare this phrase, ἡ εὐλογία τοῦ Ἀβραάμ, the blessing of *Abraham*, with verse 9. it is evident, it was the blessing wherewith *Abraham* himself was blessed ; the blessing of *Abraham*, according to the propriety of the phrase, properly signifies the blessing that *Abraham* himself enjoy'd ; and to be blessed with *Abraham*, to enjoy his blessing, and to inherit the good promised to him, with reference to his Seed, intends, in the language and disputation of the Apostle, one and the same thing ; an undeniable evidence, that the promise, as made to *Abraham*, with reference to his Seed, contained the very same good it contained as made to *Abraham* himself, the Father of that Seed. Now to him it was, to him and his Seed, that is, his natural Seed ; and therefore it is the same to his Seed,

to them and their natural Seed , or which is all one, to them in their generations.

Secondly , It will be objected ; That this blessing is not meant of a relative good , consisting in a Covenant-relation between God and *Abraham*, and his Seed, but is meant of these spiritual blessings of Reconciliation, Justification, Adoption, and Eternal Life vouchsafed to *Abraham* , as personally considered ; and 'tis granted, that *Abraham's* blessing, consisting of these spiritual blessings, is come upon believing Gentiles, through Christ : But what is this to that promise made to *Abraham* ; concerning Gods being a God to him, and his Seed in their generations, constituting an external Covenant-relation between God and them.

To this I answer, This Objection will be obviated by the second thing proposed, for the clearing up of the settlement made of *Abraham's* blessing upon believing Gentiles , by the express letter of this Scripture : and therefore I shall only say thus much at present , that it is granted , the spiritual benefits or blessings now mentioned, were included in this blessing, said here to be come upon the Gentiles through Christ, yet not exclusive of that relative good of a Covenant state and relation between God and *Abraham*, and his Seed, but that is the first and primary good intended, and that which is the foundation of all the rest, and in which they are all virtually included.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, It will be further objected, That the blessing here said to be come upon the Gentiles through Christ, is not that blessing wherewith *Abraham* himself was blessed, but that blessing promised to the Nations in him, and consequently the Apostle intends not the blessing contained in that promise of the Covenant, mentioned in that *Gen. 17. 7.* but that blessing spoken of *Gen. 12. 3.* where God Promises unto *Abraham*, that *in him all the Nations of the earth should be blessed*: and that the Apostle intends it of that blessing contained in that promise, and not of that blessing contained in that *Gen. 17.* appears from verse the eighth of this third of *Galatians*,

To this I answer two things.

First, That though I freely grant, that this blessing, said by our Apostle to be come upon the Gentiles, be that blessing with which 'twas promised to *Abraham*, That the Nations should be blessed in him, yet it will not follow, that it is not the blessing or good contained in that grand promise of the Covenant, yea, that it is the blessing contained in that grand promise of the Covenant, is abundantly proved from what hath been already spoken. And therefore,

Secondly, I answer, That that blessing, with which God promised so to bless the Nations in *Abraham*, is the same blessing contained in that grand promise of the Covenant; and therefore

the Apostle might have, and certainly hath reference to both these promises in this Chapter. For the clearing up of this, let it be observed, that there are three things considerable in this blessing promised to *Abraham*, with reference to the Nations of the Earth.

First, There is the matter of this blessing, and that is summarily, their having and enjoying God, as a God unto them and theirs.

Secondly, There are the means of their injoying that blessing, and these are either chief and principal, viz. Christ as removing the curse of the Law, and purchasing that blessing for them by his death and suffering. 2. The subordinate and less principal, viz. *Abraham* himself.

Thirdly, There is the notion or consideration under which they should receive and injoy this blessing, and that is, as *Abraham's* Seed.

Now in that *Gen. 12. 3.* we have a more general promise of this blessing, with which God intended to bless the Nations, and also a specification of the means, both supream and principal, and also subordinate and less principal, of their coming to the injoyment of it; they should be blessed in *Abraham*, that is, in *Abraham* himself; as the less principal means; in Christ, the Seed of *Abraham*, as the chief and principal means.

But in this *Gen. 17. 7.* we have both the matter of the blessing afore promised, and the notion under which they should receive and enjoy it; *I will be, saith God, a God to thee and thy Seed after thee in their generations.* The notion under which God promised to bless the Nations in *Abraham*, is, as they were his Seed; the matter of the blessing is, that *God would be a God to them in their generations*; that is, to them and theirs. So that these two Promises, *Gen. 12. 3.* and *Gen. 17. 7.* are not two distinct Promises, containing two distinct blessings, but they contain one and the same blessing, and, as taken joynly together, declare the full mind of God concerning his blessing the Nations of the Earth in *Abraham*. The sum of all comes to thus much, That God would make *Abraham* as a Father of natural Children, from among whom the Messiah should come; so a spiritual or mystical Father, and answerably would, through the interposal of that one principal Member of his Seed, *viz. Christ*, be a God to him and his Seed, both natural and mystical, in their generations; and consequently all the Nations of the Earth, whether of *Abraham's* natural Race or Posterity, or of the Gentiles, that were designed to be blessed, should be blessed in *Abraham*, as his Seed, or in him, as a common Father to them all: *And in his Seed, viz. Christ*, as the procuring cause of that their blessedness: Hence it is no wonder, though the Apostle, in speaking of the way of the blessings coming upon the Gentiles, hath reference to both these

promises, both, as I said, taken together, and in conjunction one with the other, containing the full mind of God, concerning his blessing the world: As a close of all let me add, that as God promised to bless the Nations in *Abraham*, as before opened, so he made *Abraham* himself a copy or pattern, according unto which he promised to bless them in him, and that both in respect of the blessing it self, with which he would bless them, and in respect of the terms and manner of their possessing and inheriting that blessing, *viz.* Through faith in Christ, expressing it self in universal obedience.

For the further proof of this, let it be observed, that both the Hebrew prefix and the Greek preposition we translate in, may be translated after the manner; or according to: For the Greek, see *Hebr.* 4. 11. whence *Calvin* gives the sense thus, *Non tantum significat ipsum fore exemplar, sed causam benedictionis.* *Junius* and *Tremelius* give this gloss, *Familia terre tibi insita per fidem, participes fiunt harum promissionum benedictionumque tuarum:* And thus the Apostle expounds this promise, of being blessed in *Abraham*, by another phrase, blessed with *Abraham*. Now then having proved, that this blessing, said by the Apostle to be come upon the Gentiles through Christ, is that very blessing or good contained in that grand Promise of the Covenant, and that not only in that branch of it that refers to *Abraham's* Seed, but in that branch referring directly unto *Abraham* himself, wherein God engaged to be a God to him and

and his Seed , and consequently that this is the blessing said to be come upon the Gentiles.

I come now to the second thing proposed, viz. to prove, that this blessing is come upon the Gentiles , in the same extent and latitude in which it was given to *Abraham* himself : Now this is sufficiently evident from the alone consideration of the indefiniteness and universality of the expression , the blessing of *Abraham* ; we see the Apostle affirms, the blessing of *Abraham* is come upon the Gentiles, without any restriction or limitation, he doth not say, this or that part of the blessing , but the blessing absolutely and unlimitedly.

It is true, notwithstanding the indefiniteness and universality of the Apostles expression ; yet in case any part of the blessing vouchsafed to *Abraham* be of that nature, as that the Gentiles are simply and absolutely incapable of it, or in case God himself hath any where else withheld any part of it from them, in this case a limitation and restriction must be understood, as necessarily implied in this general and universal expression ; but otherwise we ought to understand the Apostle, according to the full latitude of his expression, the blessing, that is, the whole blessing of *Abraham* is come upon believing Gentiles.

And hence we argue : If the whole blessing of *Abraham* be come upon believing Gentiles, so far as they are capable of injoying it, and God hath by no express revelation of his will with-

held it from them, and this, to have God a God to him and his natural Seed, was an essential part of his blessing, which believing Gentiles are capable of injoying, and God hath not by any revelation of his will withheld from them, then this part of his blessing is come upon them in the same extent and latitude in which it was given to *Abraham*: But the former is true, therefore the latter.

It's true, If any man can make it appear, that this part of *Abraham's* blessing, viz. Gods ingaging to be a God to his Seed with him, be a blessing the Gentiles are incapable of injoying, or that God by any expresse revelation of his will, hath withheld that part of the blessing from them, we shall cease any further claim to it.

But as for the first, The incapacity of believing Gentiles to injoy this part of *Abraham's* blessing, sure none can pretend it; for suppose it should be granted (which is not) that believers under this present dispensation are not in a like capacity to injoy this good, that Saints in future times will be; or that their Seed are not alike capable of that good the Seed of Believers in those times will be capable of: Yet none can say, that either believers, or their Seed, are incapable of what *Abraham* and his natural Seed were capable of: 'tis strange how it is possible for any man to conceit such a difference, either in the capacity of Parents or Children, or in the dispensation of God, that Believers under this present dispensation should be wholly

ly deprived of that part of the blessing, which Believers formerly injoyed, and shall again injoy at the call and conversion of the Jews.

And for the latter, Let any revelation of the will of God be produced, whereby he hath withheld this part of the blessing from Believers, and the controversie is at an end. Till then we shall take it for granted, that the blessing of *Abraham* is in this extent and latitude, in and by Christ come upon believing Gentiles. And though it is granted, the direct design of the Apostle in this place is, not to assert the latitude and extent of *Abraham's* blessing, yet the indefiniteness and universality of his expression is a sufficient warrant for our interpreting the blessing in this latitude and extent pleaded for.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

The fourth and last way of the second subordinate Propositions confirmation prosecuted. Where several passages in the New Testament are considered. Five Conclusions deduced from them; The third principally insisted upon; Where it is proved, that the Promise of Salvation appertains to the Houses of believing Parents, as such, without consideration had to the personal Faith and Repentance of any in or of their Houses, besides their own, by two Arguments. Objections against each Argument answered.

FOurthly, The truth of what we affirm in this second Proposition may be further evidenced from several passages and expressions in the new Testament, plainly declaring, that the Infant-seed of Believers under the Gospel administration, are included and taken in, as joynt-Subjects with their Parents of the Covenant and Promise thereof, and that by vertue of their Parents relation to *Abraham*, as his Seed.

Now this last way of evidencing what is pleaded for, though it might require a very large discourse, yet I shall but briefly touch upon it, partly because the truth pleaded for is, as I conceive, sufficiently evidenced from what hath been already spoken, and partly because others have already fully handled and improved these passages and expressions, I have reference unto, for the vindicating and establishing this truth, I in common with them contend for; that to add any thing more, especially there being so little, or rather nothing at all, replied to any purpose by our Opposers, may seem wholly superfluous; and therefore I shall only produce those passages and expressions in the new Testament, and shew what evidence they give into this second Proposition, in several Conclusions, necessarily flowing from, or grounded upon them, as taken together, and compared one with another.

The Passages and Expressions I have reference unto, are these five.

The first is that of *Christ*, *Mark* 10. 10.

The second is again that of *Christ*, *Luke* 19. 9.

The third is that of *Peter* to the trembling Jews, *Acts* 2. 38, 39.

The fourth is that of *Paul* to the Jaylor, *Acts* 16. 31.

The last is that of *Paul* to the *Corinthians*, *1 Cor.* 7. 14.

From all these Scriptures, as laid together, and compared one with another, these five Conclusions do necessarily follow.

First,

First, That upon Parents believing in Christ, the Promise of salvation belongs not only to themselves, but to their respective Houses: sayes the Apostle to the Jaylor, *Believe in the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved, and thine House*: where we see the Apostle proposes it as a motive and encouragement to him to believe, in that upon his believing, not only himself, but his house should be saved, that is, both he himself and his house should come under the promise of salvation; or as the Apostle Peter expounds it, *The promise of salvation should be to him and his house*: he and his house should have salvation settled upon them by promise, according to the true tenour of the promise, which as it did not secure salvation to the Jaylor himself absolutely, but upon condition of his perseverance in faith and obedience; *He that indures to the end shall be saved: Be faithful unto the death, and I will give thee a Crown of life*, saith Christ to that Church, Rev. 2. 10. from which and the like Scripture it appears, that the promise of salvation, that Believers themselves are under, is not absolute but conditional; and the same must be understood of the promises, as made to their houses, which through their Parents believing they are brought under,

And as the Apostle promises salvation to the Jaylor and his house, as a motive and encouragement to him to believe, so Christ tells *Zacharias*, that upon his believing, salvation was come to his house, that is, he and his house were now under the promise of salvation.

As for that conceit of some, that by salvation here Christ himself should be intended; as it is wholly groundless, so an evident perverting of the words of Christ.

For first, Let it be shewed where Christ is ever called salvation simply and absolutely; 'tis true, he is called Gods salvation, and Believers have appropriated him to themselves as their salvation; but that is as he is Author or Efficient of Salvation: This term *Salvation*; when used simply and absolutely, signifies Salvation properly and literally taken.

Secondly, It is evident, that Salvation here is said to be come to *Zachew* his house, as a peculiar good accrewing to him upon that very ground, and vouchsafed to him for that very reason, because he was now a Son of *Abraham*, and consequently was a good common to all, of whom the same ground and reason might be predicated or spoken, and peculiar and proper to them as such. Now as Christ did not come to all their houses, who were the Children of *Abraham*, whether natural or mystical, so he might come to their houses, who were not the Sons of *Abraham*, in the one or the other sence.

Thirdly, The Apostle doth clearly expound the meaning of Christ, *Salvation was come to his house*; that is, as the Apostle expounds it, He and his house were under the promise of Salvation. Now did not men too wilfully shut their eyes

eyes against the light of Scripture, they would not affix a sence upon the words of Christ, no where warranted from any other parallel Scripture, but contrary to the design of Christ in them, when they have a plain Exposition made by the Holy Ghost himself: we see what Christ saith of *Zachew's* house, and the Apostle promises the Jaylor, with reference to his house, that is said and promised upon one and the same ground, *viz.* the Father of both: Christ saith, *Salvation is come to his house*; he now believing, the Apostle saith, his house shall be saved upon condition of his believing. And who can imagine, but that they both speak of salvation in one and the same sence, and consequently that the Apostle expounds what that salvation was, that Christ saith was come to *Zachew*, upon his believing, 'twas the same kind of salvation that he promises to the Jaylor, upon condition of his believing.

The second Conclusion. Thus under this term *House*, Children are, in a peculiar and special manner, included and comprehended: How far this term *House*, is to be extended, whether beyond the Children of those, whose house is spoken of, or no, concerns not my present purpose; that they are included and intended under that term *House*, is all that at present I affirm. Now that the Children are intended, is evident, partly from that phrase, *Acts 16. 33.* where *ο οίκος σου*, thy house, verse 31. is expounded by this phrase, *οι αὐτοὶ πάντες*, all of him,

him, and partly from the frequent acceptation of this term *House* throughout the Scripture; it being peculiarly appropriated to the Children: Or should the term be more comprehensive, yet it cannot rationally be supposed to exclude them: And yet 'tis further evident by the Apostle *Peter*, where saith he, *The Promise is to you and your Children*: What Promise? Why the Apostle *Paul* tells us, the promise of Salvation; *The Promise is to thee and thy house*, saith *Paul* to the Jaylor. But who are we to understand by *House*? Why *Peter* tells us, his Children. Hence again, as for that conceit of others, that the meaning should be, that salvation was come only to him, and in that it was come to him, it might be said, it was come to his house, 'tis too palpable a perverting the mind of Christ: For let it be observed, that by Salvation here, is meant Salvation in a proper sense as hath been already proved; and that by *House* here, cannot be meant that material building wherein he dwelt, but his Household or Family. Now how Salvation could be said to be come to his Household, in that it was come to him, when as his Household was no wayes interested or concerned in it, is hard to imagine; properly it could not be said to be come to his house, himself was not properly his house: So that this interpretation must needs suppose, that Christ here speaks figuratively. Now let it be observed, how utterly improbable it is, that Christ should use a figurative speech, that had a direct tendency to lead men into a mistake about his

his sence and and meaning, when he might have exprest himself without any figure, in as few and as intelligible words, and thereby prevented the danger of his being mistaken: Had Christ intended that Salvation was come only to *Zachew* himself, it had been as easie for him to have said, Salvation is come to this man, as to say, Salvation is come to this house; and that this phrase, *this house*, did subject men to the danger of mistaking his sence and meaning, in case he had spoken figuratively, is sufficiently evident because that term *House*, is so frequently, yea, constantly and universally used in a sence different from what this interpretation supposeth that Christ did use it in this place, that term *House*, being constantly and universally used to signifie the Family or Children of those, whose house is spoken of, unless when it signifies the material building it self: How many hundred places might be instanced in, as an evidence of this? Let it be shewed whereever this term *House* is used as it is supposed to be in this interpretation: neither is it, as I judge, a phrase to be parallel'd in any Language whatsoever, that any good or evil should be said to be come to a house that is, the Family or Household, when it is come only to one in the house, having no reference to any beyond the particular person himself, is an expression not to be parallel'd throughout the whole Scriptures: but now 'tis the constant phrase of Scripture, to express the Family, especially the Children, by that term *House*; 'tis wholly superfluous to enumerate places; so that

hat should this term *House* be used thus improperly by Christ in this place, it must needs subject all men to the danger of mistaking his sense and meaning, and the danger must needs be the greater, because the good, viz. Salvation, said here to be come to his house, is so frequently, both in the old and new Testament, held forth, at least very probably, to say no more at present, in such an extent and latitude as to reach the whole Family, especially the Children together with their Parents; thus it was promised to *Abraham*, that *the Families of the Earth should be blessed in him*: So God promises, that he would be the God of all the Families of *Israel*. *Paul* tells the *Jaylor*, that he and his house should be saved. *Peter* tells his awakened hearers, the promise was to them and their Children, that is, in an equivalency to them and their houses. Now when it is found in such variety of passages, that the promise of Salvation extends to whole houses upon the believing of the Parents, men must needs be very apt to conceive, that Christ uses this term *House*, in a sense correspondent to those various passages, wherein the same good is at least probably held forth in such a latitude and extent, as to reach the whole houses of believing Parents. Now I say, can we imagine that Christ should use a phrase in such a sense, as the whole Scripture is unacquainted with, and which is constantly used in another sense, and thereby subject all men to so great danger of mistaking his sense and meaning, and that also to the upholding of

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what himself, according to the judgments of our Opposers, he was about to throw down, when he might have exprest himself with as much ease, & alike intelligibly, in proper terms, no way liable to be mistaken, methinks it is very strange how it is possible for any man to imagine it : So that doubtless Christ speaks properly, Salvation was come to *Zachew* his house, that is the promise of Salvation did belong to his house, in special to his Children : and this agrees, as already observed, with that promise of *Paul* to the Jaylor, *Thou shalt be saved and thy house.*

Thirdly, That the promise of Salvation belongs to the houses of believing Parents, merely as such, without consideration had to the personal faith and repentance of any in, or of their respective houses, and consequently the promise of Salvation may, and frequently doth belong to the houses of believing Parents, antecedent to the personal faith and repentance of any in or of their houses, besides themselves. What belongs to the houses of believing Parents, as such, that is, as the houses of such Parents, equally and alike belongs to all the houses of all such Parents, and consequently may belong to the houses of this or that particular believing Parent, when yet none in or of the house have personally believed or repented.

Now the truth of this Conclusion will be evident by a twofold Argument.

First,

First, What belongs to the houses of believing Parents, meerly by vertue of something universally predicable of all such Parents, must needs belong to their respective houses, as such, without consideration had to the personal faith and repentance of any in or of their respective houses: But the promise of Salvation belongs to the houses of believing Parents; by vertue of something universally predicable of all such Parents; and therefore the promise of Salvation must needs belong to all their respective houses, as the houses of such Parents, without consideration had to the personal faith and repentance of any in or of this house.

The Major proposition cannot be denied; for if the promise of Salvation belong to the houses of believing Parents, meerly by vertue of something universally predicable of all such Parents, certainly then none can question, but that the promise belongs to those houses, as the houses of such Parents, without consideration had to any thing in, or done by the houses themselves, or any in or of them. If freedom in such a Town or Corporation shall belong to the Children of Free-men, meerly by vertue of their Parents freedom, sure none could question, but that freedom did belong to them, as the Children of such Parents, without consideration had to any thing in respect of the Children themselves.

For the Minor proposition: and thus I have three things to do.

First, To shew what is that thing predicable of believing Parents, by vertue of which the promise of Salvation belongs to their respective houses.

Secondly, To prove, that the promise of Salvation doth indeed belong to the houses of such Parents, meerly by vertue of that thing predicable of them.

Thirdly, To prove, that that thing, whatever it be, is universally predicable, or is universally true of all such Parents.

For the first, And thus in brief, That thing predicable of believing Parents, by vertue of which the promise of Salvation belongs to their respective houses, is their relation unto *Abraham*, as his Seed: Therefore saith Christ of *Zachew* his house, *This day is Salvation come to this house, for as much as he is the Son of Abraham*: 'Tis his Sonship to *Abraham*, or his relation to *Abraham*, as one of his Seed, that interested his house in the promise of Salvation.

Secondly, Which is the main thing to be proved, That the promise of Salvation doth belong to the houses of believing Parents, meerly by vertue of their Parents relation unto *Abraham*, as his Seed. Now this is evident from that passage of Christ concerning *Zachew* his house, *Salvation is come to this house, for as much as he also is a Son of Abraham*; that by house is not

not meant *Zacheus* himself, is before proved ; it must needs be meant of his Household, or Family, peculiarly intending his Children. Now says, Christ, *Salvation is come to this house*, that is, to this Household or Family, *for as much as he is a Son of Abraham*. Whether *Zacheus* was a Jew or a Roman is all one as to my purpose, seeing he is considered here, not as a natural, but as a mystical Son of *Abraham* ; and as such a one, Christ affirms, *Salvation was come to his house* ; plainly grounding his houses right to, and interest in *Salvation*, upon his own relation to *Abraham*, as one of his Seed ; *Salvation* was not only to himself, but to his household, by virtue of his relation to *Abraham*, as one of his Seed, and that the promise of *Salvation* belongs to the houses of such Parents, meerly by virtue of that their relation to *Abraham*, is evident, because the Scripture assigns nothing else as necessarily to concur with that their Parents relation unto *Abraham*, for the effecting or producing their houses right to, and interest in the promise : Christ tells us here, That *Salvation* was come to this mans house by virtue of his relation unto *Abraham* ; and let it be shewed, where any thing else is required, for the effecting or producing that their interest in, and right to the promise.

It may be some will say, 'Tis easily done ; the Apostle *Peter* makes effectual calling a necessary prerequisite to the Seed of believing Parents interest in, and right to the promises ; for saith
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he, *The Promise is to you and your Children, and to all that are afar off, even to as many as the Lord our God shall call.* Whence it seems to be evident, that notwithstanding Parents relation to *Abraham*, as his Seed, yet the promise of Salvation appertains not to their Children, but upon supposition of their being effectually called.

To that I answer two things (not to stay upon a vindication of that Text of the Apostle from the unsound sense supposed in this Objection;

First, That Christ doth not say; Salvation shall come to this house, but he speaks in the time past, Salvation is come: 'tis true, if it had been only a promise referring to the time to come, there had been some shew of colour for the supposing such a condition to be implied in it; but Christ saith, Salvation was then come, and that upon that ground, and for that reason, because he also was a Son of *Abraham*. Now should we interpret this affirmation of Christ by that of the Apostle, according to the sense given by our Opposers, his words would run thus, Salvation is come to this house; that is, to as many of them as the Lord our God shall call, which would be contradictory, for if it were come already, the coming of it could not depend upon a future condition. If the coming of Salvation did depend upon the performance of a future condition, it could not be said to be come already, and therefore we must not interpret this

his passage of Christ by that of *Peter*, but that passage of *Peter* by that of Christ.

Secondly, I answer, That this was a good vouchsafed to *Zacheus*, upon the account of his relation to *Abraham*, as one of his Seed, and answerably was a good common to all standing alike related to *Abraham*, and proper and peculiar unto them; but now to have the promise of Salvation upon condition of being effectually called, is a good common to all men universally, and therefore the promise is said to be to all whom the Lord our God shall call; but Salvation was come to *Zacheus* his house as he was a Son of *Abraham*; so that we see it was meerly by vertue of his relation unto *Abraham*, that the promise of Salvation belongs to his house, Christ affirming, that Salvation was come by vertue of that his relation; and the Scripture being silent as to the necessary concurrence of any thing else for the interesting his house in the promise of Salvation; we may positively conclude, the promise of Salvation doth belong to the houses of all believing Parents, meerly by vertue of that their relation to *Abraham* as his Seed, especially if we consider,

Thirdly, That this relation to *Abraham* is universally predicable of all believing Parents: All believing Parents are the Children of *Abraham*, and consequently this could be no privilege peculiar to *Zacheus*, to have Salvation come

to his house, as he was a Son of *Abraham*; but is a priviledge common to all believing Parents, they standing alike related to *Abraham* as he did. So that the Minor Proposition is undoubtedly true, whence the Conclusion will undoubtedly follow.

My second Argument is this, If the promise of Salvation may and ought to be applied by the dispensers of the Gospel to believing Parents, both with reference to themselves and their Children, meerly as such, that is, as believing Parents, without consideration had to the personal faith and repentance of any in or of their houses, then the promise of Salvation must needs belong to them and their houses, without consideration had to the personal faith and repentance of any in or of their houses: but the former is true, therefore the latter.

Certainly if a Minister of the Gospel may apply the promise of Salvation, not only to believing Parents themselves, but to their houses, then that promise belongs not only to them, but to their houses: Ministers may not apply promises any other wayes then as they belong to those to whom the application is made.

Now that the promise of Salvation may and ought to be applyed in this extent and latitude, not only to believing Parents themselves, but to their respective houses, and that meerly as such, without consideration had to the personal faith and repentance of any in or of their houses, is evident, past all rational contradiction, by the
Apostles

Aposiles proposing the promise in this extent and latitude to the Jaylor. As the Apostle did propose it to the Jaylor, as a motive to him to believe, it might and ought to have been applied to him upon his actual believing, he might have been assured, that now he and his house should be saved, yet in that way, and according to that method, or upon the terms held forth in the Covenant of Grace (an account of which we have already given.) And that the Apostle proposes this promise in the extent and latitude before exprest to the Jaylor, upon condition of his own believing, without consideration had to the personal faith and repentance of any in or of his house, is evident from the express words of the Text; *Thou shalt be saved and thy house*; and consequently might have been applied to him, as a Believer, upon his actual believing; and hence it appears, that this promise did not appertain to him alone, it was not a privilege peculiar to him; to have his house under the same promise with himself, but a privilege common to all believing Parents. *Quatenus ipsum, concludes de omni.*

The only Objection I have met with is this; That as the Promise was made conditionally, to the Jaylor himself, so to his house, that is, as the Apostle promised to him, that if he believed he should be saved; so he promised to him, with reference to his house, that if they believed they should be saved, according to the interpretation given of that promise of Peter, *Acts 2. 39.*

To that I answer, That though it is readily granted, that the promise, as externally proposed, was conditionall both to himself, and his house, yet I say, that his own believing did give his house an actual right to, and interest in the promise (yet to be fulfilled, according to the terms of the Covenant) is evident, because there could be no reason of the Apostles adding that other branch of the promise as a motive to him to believe, unless by his believing a peculiar good (which can be nothing else but this right to, and interest in the promise) did accrew to his house. It had been a stronger motive for the Apostle to have said, Believe in the Lord Jesus and thou shalt be saved, and all the Town, or Country, yea, all the World. If the Apostle had not intended a peculiar good, in relation to the salvation of his house, redounding to them by his believing, there had been no more reason for him to mention his house, than for him to have mentioned the whole Town or Country, or whole World, in as much as they should all be saved upon condition of their believing.

And hence, whereas when this consideration is urged to prove, That the Apostle *Peter* holds forth and declares the Covenant, and promises thereof, in this latitude and extent, to those awakened Jews, *Acts 2. 29.*

It is replied, That there were other Reasons of his mentioning their Children, then the asserting their right to, and interest in the Covenant and Promise thereof. That shift (for so I shall call it) can have no place here, for if it should

should be granted, that the Apostle *Peter* might mention the Children of these Jews, with respect to that imprecation they were under, recorded in *Matth. 27. 25.* or with respect to that first offer and tender of Christ and the grace of the Gospel to be made to the Jews; yet there could be no such reason of the Apostle mentioning the Jaylor's house, they were under no such imprecation, neither had they any privilege above others, in point of the offers and tenders of Salvation to be made to them; and therefore the only reason imaginable of the Apostles mentioning of his house, was to assure him, that upon his believing he should enjoy the promise of Salvation, in the extent and latitude it was at the first establishment of the Covenant given unto *Abraham*: had not the promise extended to his house, as well as to himself, personally considered, there had been no reason for the Apostle to mention his house, and tell him, that not only himself, but his house should be saved, had not a peculiar good redounded to his house by his believing: It had been a more effectual motive to have told him, that the whole Town should have been saved in as much as then his house had been included, and he had had a further intimation of the probability of other his Friends, Relations and Acquaintance Salvation.

Secondly, I answer, If we compare this promise of *Paul* to the Jaylor, with that fore-mentioned passage of Christ concerning *Za-*
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cheus his house, 'tis evident, the Apostle propoundeth this promise, in both branches of it, to him, upon the alone condition of his personal believing; and his meaning is, that in case he himself should believe, he and his house should be saved, that is, as *Peter* (as hath been already observed) expounds it, the promise of Salvation would be to him and his house; and that this is his meaning, appears from that parallel passage of Christ: Christ tells *Zacheus*, *Salvation was come to his house*, upon his own believing, and that upon that very ground, or for that very reason, because he now was a Son of *Abraham*, and upon the same ground, and for the same reason, we must suppose that the Apostle makes this promise to the Jaylor; the Apostle is to be understood, according to that of Christ; it is as if he had said, believe in the Lord Jesus, and thereby thou wilt become a Son of *Abraham*, and as so related to him, shall enjoy the promises in the same extent and latitude in which it was made to him at the first establishment of it. God will be a God to thee and thy house, that is eminently thy Children, which is all one as to the sense and importance of that promise, Salvation shall come to thee and thy house, or, The promise will be to thee and thy Children: all these phrases are of one and the same importance and signification. So that from all, the truth of this our third Conclusion evidently appears, and from it, before I proceed to the other, we may infer these two things.

First,

First, That it is not at all necessary to affirm or prove, that there were any Infants in the Jaylors house at this time, in order to the proving, from the Apostles making this conditional promise to him and his house; that the promises of the Covenant are given to, and settled upon believing Gentiles, in the same latitude and extent that they were given to *Abraham*, at the first establishment of the Covenant with him; if he had any Infants, the promise had belonged to them as part of his house; the promise was to him, with reference to his house, as a Believer, without consideration had to the personal faith and repentance of any in or of his house; hence whoever was to be included in this term *house*, had the promise appertaining to them, whether capable of believing or repenting or no, and consequently had appertained to his Infants, in case he had had any, they being necessarily to be included in this term *house*; and suppose there was no Infants in his house at that time, yet in that this was a promise, not peculiar and proper to him, but common to all Believers, the promise belongs to the Infants in their respective houses. The promise appertains to the house, by virtue of the Parents believing, as thereby they are ingrafted into *Abraham's* Family, and become one of his Seed; and hence all that are included in that term *house*, have the promise appertaining unto them, and consequently Infants as well as others.

And if it should be said, There might be some Children grown up, who might refuse to accept of the promise, as made upon the terms of the Gospel, and how could the promise appertain to them.

I answer, Their case would have been the very same with the case of the Jews, at the first preaching of the Gospel. The promise appertain'd to them, as of the houses of believing Parents, but their actual refusal would have, *ipso facto*, disannulled that their right and title to the promise, and so they, by their own sin, had deprived themselves of the good promised.

Secondly, We may infer, that the Scripture frequently mentioning the personal faith and repentance of the houses, or of any in the houses of believing Parents, no way opposes, but on the other hand strongly confirms the truth of what we affirm in this second Proposition, concerning the settlement of *Abraham's* promise, in the full latitude and extent of it, upon believing Gentiles, in that the houses, or any in the houses of believing Parents, were savingly wrought upon, either at the same time, or immediately after their Parents believing and accepting the terms of the Covenant, it cannot be with the least shew of reason inferred or concluded from thence, that they had not the promise of Salvation appertaining to them, ineerly as the houses, or as of the houses of such Parents, without

without consideration had to their own personal faith and repentance; but on the other hand it doth strongly prove, they were under the promise, as the houses of such Parents, in their believing and repenting the Promise was verified; their believing and repenting was a visible demonstration, that the promise, in the extent and latitude before express, viz. as reaching and taking in the houses with the Parents themselves, was duly and rightfully applyed to such Parents by the Apostle, when we find the Apostle applyes the promises of the Covenant to the Gentiles, in the same latitude and extent that they were given to *Abraham*, viz. as taking in their Children with them, and then read of the faith and repentance of their Children, immediately following upon their own believing, it may more fully assure us, that the promise runs still in the same latitude and extent that it formerly run in: why, we have not only the Apostles application of the promise for our assurance, but we have God himself confirming that application made by the Apostle, in his giving in the good promised, in that extent and latitude, in which the Apostle did apply the promise: The Apostle applyes the promise in this extent, *Thou and thy house shall be saved*: God by actually giving in the good promised, assures us, that the Apostles application was according to his mind and will, that he was and would be still a God, not only to believing Gentiles, personally considered, but a God also to their respective houses: So that whether there were any

Infant

Infant-children, or any Children in their Infant capacity in these houses, the baptism of which is recorded in Scripture, or no, is all one as to what I contend for. The promise of Salvation, which is equivocally the same with that of Gods being a God to them, appertains to the houses of believing Parents, as such, without consideration had to the personal faith of those houses, or any in them. - If there were no Infant-children, yet the promise appertains to the house; if there were, the promise appertained to them as part of such a house: and the mention made in Scripture of the personal faith and repentance of such houses, or any in them, no way opposes, but confirms their interest in, and right to that promise of Salvation, and consequently they ought to be baptized, as will appear from the proof of our third Proposition.

But let that suffice, for the second Conclusion, which is that I principally aimed at, and therefore have especially insisted upon it. I shall but mention the other two. And therefore,

Fourthly, That the interest that the houses of believing Parents have in the promise of Salvation denominates them holy, and constitutes them of the Kingdom, Church, or Mystical Body of Christ; this I gather from *Mark 16.* and *1 Cor. 7. 14.* taken in conjunction with those other new Testament Scriptures aforementioned.

Lastly,

Lastly, That this interest in the promise of salvation accrews to the houses of believing Parents, by vertue of such Parents relation to *Abraham*, as his Seed : This is evident from that of Christ concerning *Zachens*, *Salvation is come to his house, for as much as he is a Son of Abraham.* And from all it appears, that the very same promise, made to *Abraham* and his natural Seed, is still continued to, and settled upon believing Gentiles, which is our second Proposition : Let us now hear what is objected against what is asserted in it.

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CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

*Objections against the second
subordinate Proposition, con-
sidered and answered.**Object. I.*

'TIs conceived by some, and that not a few, that what hath been affirm'd in the foregoing Propositions, at least the latter of them, lyes in a direct opposition to that Text of the Apostle, *Rom. 9. 7, 8.* and therefore cannot be true. And thus 'tis objected: How can it be true, that God should intend *Abraham's* natural Seed (take it of his natural Seed in the sence of the first Position) and that as such, in that promise, wherein he engages himself to be a God to him and his Seed; or how can it be true, that this promise, in that latitude and extent should be given to, and settled upon be-
lievers

lievers under the new Testament; when the Apostle, having a direct reference to this very promise, positively affirms, *That the Children of the flesh are not the Children of God, but the Children of the Promise are accounted for the Seed.* Say our Opposers, Certainly it cannot be true, that God should intend *Abraham's* natural Seed, that is, the Children of his flesh, and that meerly as such, in that promise; or suppose that promise might have a literal respect to *Abraham's* natural Seed, as such, yet sure it cannot be true, that this promise is given to, or settled upon believers under the new Testament, so as that God should still stand obliged by that promise, to be a God to them and their natural Seed; for the Apostle tells us in express words, *That the Children of the flesh are not the Children of God, but the Children of the promise are accounted for the Seed.*

For answer to this Objection I shall, as the Lord shall assist, do these two things,

First, Shew that there is no contrariety or repugnancy, between what hath been affirmed in the foregoing Propositions, or either of them, and this Text of the Apostle.

Secondly, Shew that this place of the Apostle rightly understood, contributes not a little to the establishment and confirmation of what hath been said in the foregoing Propositions.

For the first ; That there is no repugnancy between what hath been affirmed and this Text of the *Apostle*, will soon appear, by declaring what is the true and genuine sence of the *Apostle* in these verses : and thus it is agreed on all hands, that the *Apostles* design and scope is to open and declare how that word of promise, wherein God ingaged to be a God to *Abraham* and his Seed, stood firm, and had its full accomplishment, according to the true intendment of God in it, notwithstanding the rejection of so great a part of his seed.

Beza, I judge, doth rightly state the Question answered by the *Apostle*, *Qui fieri possit ut rejectus sit Israel quin simul constitnendum videatur irritum esse pactum Dei cum Abrahamo & ejus semine.* That was the Question, How *Israel* could be rejected, and the Covenant that God, made with *Abraham* and his Seed, not made void thereby.

Now to this Question the *Apostle* answers in a twofold general Assertion.

First, That all are not *Israel* that are of *Israel*.

Secondly, That because they are the Seed of *Abraham* they are not all Children.

Two things might be urged as Reasons, why the Jews could not be rejected without a failure on Gods part, in his promises to them: The latter, which they mainly insisted upon, was, That they were the Seed of *Abraham*, and that God had promised to be a God to him and his Seed after him.

To this latter plea the *Apostle* answers in this latter assertion, and shews, that their rejection did not make void that promise of God, and in order hereunto explains the true sense and meaning of that promise.

This the *Apostle* doth in these two verses; so that these two verses contain the *Apostles* exposition of that grand promise made to *Abraham*, with reference to his Seed.

Now that we may rightly understand the *Apostle* in the exposition he gives us of this promise, and not mistake about his exposition, as the Jews did about the promise it self, we must inquire into two things.

First, What the *Apostle* denies.

Secondly, What he affirms, with reference to that promise.

For the first, And thus the *Apostle* denies that all that were the Seed of *Abraham*, and had that promise appertaining to them, as his Seed, were the Children of God: Thus verse 7. *Neither because they are the Seed of Abraham, are*

they all Children, which is explained in the next verse ; where observe, when the *Aposile* sayes, *The children of the flesh*, *these are not the children of God*, he must be interpreted by the words immediately aforegoing, and his meaning is, they are not all the children of God, for so he expresses himself in the foregoing words. In this eighth verse the *Aposile* amplifies, and further explains what he had more generally laid down in the seventh verse ; whence it is evident, that he speaks of the same persons in both ; and answerably, as by the children of the flesh, ver. 8. the same persons are intended that are express'd by that phrase, *the Seed of Abraham*, ver. 7. so when he says of the children of the flesh, *they are not the children of God*, he means only, as he had afore express'd, they are not all the children of God : some that were the children of the flesh, were also the children of God, as *Isaac* in particular ; but all that were the children of the flesh were not the children of God.

Now I say, the *Aposile* denies that those that were the *Seed of Abraham*, or the children of the flesh, were all the children of God : where considering what the general design and scope of the *Aposile* is, viz. to prove the consistency of *Israels* rejection with the truth of that promise, by opening and declaring the true mind and meaning of God in it, these two things are clearly supposed and implied by the *Aposile*.

First, That those who are not the children of God, whatever reference or respect the promise had to them, yet might be rejected without breach of promise on Gods part.

Secondly, That the promise did not necessarily presuppose that God had done, or was obliged to do, for every one to whom the promise did appertain, what was absolutely necessary to their being or becoming the children of God, in such a sence as that they could not be rejected without breach of promise on Gods part.

These two things the Apostle must needs imply and suppose in this Negation: and hence the full of what he denyes is this, That this promise, whether taken as a definite promise, respecting *Abraham's* natural Seed, as immediately proceeding from his own loins, singularly considered, or as an indefinite promise, respecting his whole race and posterity, collectively considered, did oblige God, either to be their God and own them as his people, but upon supposition of their being his children, or to do that for each particular of them, absolutely necessary to their bearing that denomination of his children.

And if any ask, What that is that is absolutely necessary to a persons bearing the denomination of a Child of God.

I answer two things.

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First,

First, Election before time.

Secondly, Supposing that person grown up to years of maturity, conversion or a saving work of grace upon the heart in time.

Now all that the Apostle denies is, That this promise did necessarily presuppose, that all to whom it was made, were elected or chosen of God actually to inherit the good promised; or that the promise did oblige God savingly to work upon them in time; whence in respect of individual and particular persons, as they might not be elected, so they might not be savingly converted; and thereupon might be rejected of God, without any breach of promise on his part.

Secondly, What the Apostle doth affirm with reference to this promise; and thus he doth affirm, *That the children of the promise are accounted for the Seed.*

Now here again two things must be inquired into.

First, Who the Apostle means by the children of the promise? And for this, these must needs be such of *Abraham's* natural Seed who might rightfully bear that denomination of the children of God; children of the promise must needs intend such of *Abraham's* Seed, or such children of his flesh, who were not only the children of his flesh, but also the children of
God:

God. For let it be observed, that the question was concerning *Abraham's* Seed, or the children of his flesh, and that as such having that promise pertaining unto them; whence it will undeniably follow, that both those who were not the children of God, and those who were the children of the promise, were *Abraham's* natural Seed; and consequently, by the children of the promise we must understand the elect of *Abraham's* natural Seed, or such who amongst them had a saving work of grace wrought upon them.

Secondly, How they are said to be accounted for the Seed? Now for this: They are said by the Apostle, to be accounted for the Seed in some peculiar and special sence, in which the other of *Abraham's* Seed, as contradistinguished from them, were not accounted for the Seed: Now that can be only in respect of their election before time, and their actual injoyment of the good promised in time; they cannot be said to be accounted for the Seed in this sence, as though none but these were intended in that promise, for the Reason before given, viz. Because the question concerning the whole natural Seed of *Abraham*, and that as they were intended in that promise; so that they could not be accounted for the Seed, as though they alone were intended in that promise; for the Apostle grants, yea, the very Question he answers, doth necessarily suppose others to be intended in

in that promise besides them ; therefore these can be said to be accounted for the Seed only, in the sence and upon the account beforementioned.

From all it is evident , that the Apostle doth not deny that *Abraham's* natural Seed, and that as such, were intended in that grand Promise of the Covenant ; nor doth he affirm , that the children of the promise were only accounted for the Seed , in relation to an interest in that promise : All that he denyes is , That they are all the children of God : And all that he affirms is , That they, in a peculiar and special sence, were accounted for the Seed in the eye of that promise : So that the plain and genuine meaning of the Apostle is this , as if he should say, when God promised to be a God to *Abraham* and to his Seed, that doth not presuppose that all his children were elected , or that God was obliged by that promise savingly to work upon every individual of his Seed ; whereupon they might be rejected of God , and yet his word of promise receive its full accomplishment , there being a certain number chosen of God from eternity , whom in time he savingly works upon , and who in that regard were eminently intended as the Seed in that promise, and in the accomplishment of the promise to them it is fully verified , according to the true intent, mind and meaning of God in it.

Now

Now then what repugnancy or contrariety is there between what hath been affirmed in the foregoing Propositions, or either of them, and this Text of Scripture?

We affirm, that when God promised to *Abraham*, to be a God to him and his Seed, he intended his natural Seed as the first and next Subjects of this promise, and that this promise in the same latitude and extent is settled upon and confirmed to believing Gentiles: the Apostle denies it not, only saith, that all to whom the promise was made are not the children of God, and thereupon might be rejected, and yet the word of promise not made void thereby; withall affirming, that there was a certain number in and among this Seed of *Abraham*, to whom this promise did appertain, that were elected of God, who never were rejected, but had the promise alwayes made good to them, and in that regard had the denomination of *Abraham's* Seed peculiarly due to them, and that the promise was fully accomplished in their injoyment of the good promised. Now I say, what shew of contrariety between what we affirm, and what the Apostle saith?

Now that this was the true intendment, mind and meaning of God in this promise, the Apostle proves, by producing a twofold Instance, wherein God himself declared that to be his sence and meaning in it.

First,

First, He instances in the Subjects of this Promise immediately descended from *Abraham's* own loins, these were, among others, *Ishmael* and *Isaac*: and here the Apostle shews how God declared his true sence and meaning in that Promise, by his chusing *Isaac* actually to inherit the good promised, when he passed by *Ishmael*, who thereupon, through his own sin, was rejected of God, and cast out of Covenant: This peculiar choice of *Isaac* was signified to *Abraham* by promise, *At the set time will I come, and Sarah shall have a Son*; by that Promise God did tacitely intimate to *Abraham*, that *Isaac*, the Son promised him by *Sarah*, was the person chosen for the actual injoyment of the good promised; and this choice of *Isaac* was a tacite intimation, that *Ishmael* was passed by, and not designed to the joynt inheriting of the good promised with *Isaac*.

Secondly, The Apostle instances in the Subjects of this Promise mediately descended from *Abraham*, for look what was the sence of the Promise made to *Abraham*, the same was the sence and meaning of it as made to his Seed; and thus the Apostle instances in the Children of *Isaac*, and shews again how God did declare what was his mind and meaning in this Promise, as it was made to *Abraham's* Seed in their Generations, viz. That as thereby he intended not infallibly to secure the good promised to all *Abraham's* immediate Children, so he intended

not

not thereby to secure the good promised to all the Children of his Seed, as included with them in the Promise, as made to them in their Generations; this the Lord declared by his choice of *Jacob*, when he passed by *Esau*; which choice was again signified to *Isaac* by promise, *The elder shall serve the younger*; by that promise God signified to *Isaac*, that he had chosen *Jacob* as the person that should actually inherit the good promised, whereby he intimated his passing by of *Esau*.

Now upon the warrant of this twofold instance, the Apostle declares the sense afore given, to be according to the mind and meaning of God in this promise; and that this is the true sense and meaning of the Apostles exposition of this Promise, is sufficiently evident from what hath been already said in the explication of the words, where it hath been proved, that the Apostle cannot be understood, as though he denied that the natural Seed of *Abraham*, and that as such were intended in that Promise; the Question he answers being concerning *Abraham's* natural Seed, and that as such having that Promise appertaining to them: and therefore he cannot be supposed to deny them to be intended in the Promise, the very Question he answers taking it for granted, that they were intended.

And if any should say, It is true, the Question doth suppose and take for granted, that the

the Jews , or the persons putting it , did conceive, that the Promise did intend *Abraham's* natural Seed, but that was their mistake, which the Apostle rectifies.

But to that I answer , The whole context shews it was otherwise ; and that the Apostle himself doth suppose it, and take it for granted ; The Apostle doth not answer a Question that might be grounded upon a mistake about the Subjects of that Promise, but he answers a Question grounded upon what really was : we see he grants some to be of *Israel*, that were not *Israel*, and that some were the Seed of *Abraham*, and as such intended in that Promise, who yet were not the Children of God ; and consequently he cannot deny *Abraham's* natural Seed to be intended in that Promise , nor affirm the Children of the Promise were only accounted for the Seed ; but that they are so accounted in a peculiar and special sence before opened. Now I say , that the Apostle is thus to be understood , I shall endeavour to make out a little further , though what hath been already said might suffice to those that will but seriously weigh things.

And for this let it be observed , that if the Apostle doth not restrain this term *Seed*, in that Promise, only to the Elect, then there is nothing at all said by him in this exposition he gives us of it ; so much as in the least intimating that the natural Seed of *Abraham*, and that as such,

were

were not intended in that Promise. As for what he denyes, with reference to that Promise, there is no one word intimating that *Abraham's* natural Seed were not intended; he only denyes, that all the Seed of *Abraham* were the Children of God; which might be true, though they were all intended in that Promise, as conditionally made and externally declared to *Abraham*.

Now if so be he doth not restrain this term *Seed* in this Promise only to the Elect, and so exclude all others universally from being intended in it, the natural Seed of *Abraham*, and that as such, might be, for ought what the Apostle hath said, intended in it. And as for what he affirms, though the Elect were in a peculiar and special sence intended, yet others might be also intended, though not in that peculiar and special sence in which they were.

Now that the Apostle doth not expound this term *Seed*, as meant only of the Elect, is evident by these three Reasons.

First, Because then he should in expresse words contradict God himself, God having declared that he intended some in that Promise, who were not elected, this is evident in *Dent. 29. 10, 11; 12, 13.* where the Lord tells the people of *Israel*, he now entred into, or rather renewed Covenant with them, to fulfil this very Promise made to *Abraham*, with reference to his Seed: and certainly he must needs refer to this very
 Promise

Promise made to *Abraham*, with reference to his Seed: and certainly he must needs refer to this very Promise made to *Abraham*. Only to prevent mistakes, and that I may not be supposed to contradict both the Truth and my self, let it be noted, that I do not say they were intended in that Promise, so as that they had meerly, as of *Abraham's* natural Race and Posterity, an actual right to, and interest in that Promise; but my meaning is only this, That as that Promise had an indefinite respect to *Abraham's* whole Race and Posterity, collectively taken, and as these particular persons, with whom God now renewed his Covenant, were afore appointed of God to be some of those who should have the benefit of the Promise, so these were intended in it, and answerably these were intended, not immediately and directly, but consequently as they were foreseen and fore appointed by God, to be the peculiar persons that should have the Promise, as indefinitely made to *Abraham's* Seed, collectively taken, made good to them. Now who can suppose that every individual Member, whether Infants or grown Persons in this Congregation, were elected or chosen actually to enjoy the good promised? Now if the Apostle should restrain this Promise only to the Elect, he must needs contradict God in this declaration here made of his mind in it. God declares plainly, he intended some not elected; and should the Apostle say, he intended only the Elect, that

would

would be a direct contradiction of God himself.

Secondly , That the Apostle cannot expound this term *Seed* , as meant only of the Elect , is evident , because at least many persons intended in that Promise might be ordinarily known to men to be the persons intended in it ; but now the Elect cannot ordinarily be known by men , and that at least many intended in this Promise might ordinarily be known to be the persons intended in it , is evident , because there was a duty enjoined , with reference to them ; this duty was the application of the Token of the Covenant . Now had the Elect only been intended , it had been impossible for that duty to be universally performed by man , with reference to them .

Thirdly , This is evident , because the Promise did constitute some of *Israel* , who yet were not elected , therefore the Apostle cannot be supposed to restrain the term *Seed* only to the Elect .

But two things will be said by way of reply to what hath been hitherto discoursed ; for the clearing up the sense and meaning of the Apostle in this exposition he here gives of that Promise ,

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First,

First, It will be said , That all those that make this Objection do not deny but, some do grant, that that promise did in some sence intend, and had respect to *Abraham's* natural Seed, and that as such, *viz.* as it was a promise of a temporal good , or containing only a temporal blessing, that which these deny is this, *viz.* That this Promise (as a Promise of saving Grace , of Justification and Life) had respect to the natural Seed of *Abraham* , as such ; and that is the meaning of the Apostle when he sayes , *The Children of the Promise are accounted for the Seed* he means, they and they only are accounted for the Seed , respective to that Promise, as it was a promise of saving Grace : The Apostle grants the Promise was made to *Abraham's* natural Seed , but there shews what their mistake was, that did suppose the Promise would be made void, in case the Jews should be rejected, and shews this to be their mistake , That they supposed that this Promise, as it was a Promise of saving Grace did appertain to the natural Seed of *Abraham*, as such.

Now this mistake the Apostle rectifies and shews , that as such a spiritual Promise, it did not at all respect *Abraham's* natural Seed, as such, but was made only to the Elect, they only were accounted for the Seed.

Seed, respective to this Promise as so understood.

To that I answer two things.

First, Let it be observed, that the present framers of this Objection, in the sense now expressed, do grant, that the Promise in some sense did intend *Abraham's* natural Seed, and that as such; whence it will follow, that if it be evident, that it intended not only a temporal, but a spiritual good, as made to *Abraham's* Seed universally, as well as to himself; of which by and by, then our first Proposition is true by the grant at least of some of our Opposers, they granting that in a sense it did intend them.

But you will say, Whatever Argument may be offered, yet the Apostle shews plainly, that as it was a Promise of saving Grace, it was made only to the Elect, for saith he, taking the Promise in this sense, *The Children of the Promise are accounted for the Seed*, and we must believe the Apostle whatever Argument may seem to prove the contrary.

I answer to this.

Secondly, Consider the Apostle doth no more restrain this Promise, as a Promise of

saving Grace to the Elect, than he doth re-
 strain it to them as a Promise of a meer tem-
 poral good, if he doth not restrain it to them
 wholly, and in an absolute sence, he doth not
 restrain it to them at all; for observe it, in
 case he restrains it as a spiritual Promise, and
 not as a temporal Promise, to the Elect, that
 limited restraint must be exprest either in the
 words themselves, or inferr'd from the Con-
 text or the Apostles scope in them. For the
 words themselves, there is nothing intima-
 ting such a limited restraint, for sayes he,
The Children of the flesh are not the Children
of God, but the Children of the Promise are
accounted for the Seed. He doth not say, the
 Children of the flesh are not intended in that
 Promise, as a Promise of saving Grace. So *the*
Children of the Promise are accounted for the
Seed; not are accounted for the Seed,
 as that Promise was a Promise of saving
 Grace.

But it will be said, When he sayes of *the*
Children of the flesh, they are not the Children
of God, 'tis all one as if he had said, they
 were not intended in that Promise, as it is a
 Promise of saving Grace.

To that I answer: 'Tis not all one, in as
 much as 'tis possible, that persons may be un-
 der a Promise of saving Grace, as made con-
 ditionally

ditionally to them, and yet not be the Children of God, in the sence of the Apostle, nor ever become the Children of God in that sence : So that unless it can be proved, that none can be under a Promise of saving Grace, as conditionally made, or under a Promise of saving Grace as indefinitely made to some species or sort of persons, collectively taken, unless they are either at present the Children of God, or shall infallibly become so for the future, it cannot be said, 'tis all one to say, that for the Apostle to deny the natural Seed of *Abram* to be the Children of God, and to deny they are intended in that Promise, as a Promise of saving Grace, because they might be intended in that Promise, and yet never be the Children of God. Persons may be under a conditional promise, or an indefinite promise of saving Grace, and yet cannot be from thence denominated in an absolute sence to be the Children of God, nor proved thereby, that they should ever become so; so that such a limited restraint of this promise to the Elect only, is not in the least intimated in the words themselves.

Secondly, For, the context and scope of the Apostle neither doth infer such a limited restraint of the Promise to the Elect only, or a necessity of putting such construction upon

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the words; this is evident from what hath been already said in explaining the sence and meaning of them: The words, as afore opened, as fully agree to and answer the Apostles design and scope, as if they were understood with a limited restraint, they would do, and do as fully answer and satisfie the Question or Objection he was to answer.

This is so plain, that it would be superfluous to add any thing more than what hath been already said: So that there is nothing in the words themselves, or that can be deduced from the Context, or the Apostles design and scope in them, to necessitate our understanding the Apostle to intend any such limited restraint of this promise to the Elect only; if it be not wholly and absolutely restrained to them, it is not restrained to them at all, for ought what appears from the Text of the Apostle.

Now our Opposers themselves grant, That in some sence the promise was not restrained to the Elect, but did intend *Abraham's* natural Seed, as such, and therefore we may conclude it was not at all restrained to them.

But it will be said secondly, That though it be granted, that this promise, as intending both

both temporal and spiritual blessings, did intend, and was made to *Abraham's* natural Seed, and that as such, and consequently that the Covenant did take in *Abraham's* natural Seed under the first Testament, as is affirmed in the first Proposition; yet the *Apostle* here shews, that now under the Gospel administration it should be so no longer.

Now the Children of the flesh are not the Children of God in any sence, but the Children of the Promise, that is, true Believers are only accounted for *Abraham's* Seed.

To that I answer, 'Tis evident from the Context, that the *Apostle* speaks not at all of the extent and latitude in which the Covenant should be made with, or continued to Believers under the New Testament, for the Question he is answering doth not all immediately and directly concern Believers under the New Testament, but wholly immediately and directly concerns the *Jewes*. And observe it, What an answer should the *Apostle* return to the proposed Question, according to the judgment of those that make this reply.

The Question was, How could *Israel* be rejected, and God remain true to his Word

of promise made to *Abraham* their Father, with reference unto them.

Now what doth the Apostle answer to this Question?

Why, according to the Judgment of these men he answers, That though the Covenant was made with *Abraham* and his natural Seed, yet now it is only made with Believers themselves, and extends not to their natural Seed, as it did during the first Testament administration.

And what had that been to the purpose, not only the Jewish Infants, but the Parents themselves were rejected.

I, you will say, That Parents were cast off as well as their Seed is granted, yea, that is the very design of the Apostle to shew, that now under the Gospel administration the Jews themselves, though *Abraham's* natural Seed, could no longer continue the people of God, upon the account of their fleshly descent from *Abraham*, unless they did personally believe themselves, and they not believing, both they and their Children were rejected from those priviledges they had hitherto enjoyed, upon the account of their natural descent from *Abraham*.

To this I answer two things:

First, I deny that the Jews had their Covenant state and relation, and consequently their abiding; in the House or Family of God continued to them hitherto, upon the account of their natural descent from *Abraham*, as hath been already declared, and might be further manifested if needful: Hence this could not be the design of the Apostle, to shew the cessation of that privilege, because there was no such privilege heretofore vouchsafed to them; the promise considered as a definite promise, did not extend beyond *Abraham's* natural Seed, immediately proceeding from his own loins.

Secondly, I answer, That that Promise, as an indefinite promise made to *Abraham*, with reference to his natural Seed, taken collectively, doth still appertain to the Jews, notwithstanding the rejection of so great a part of them: This the Apostle grants in this discourse, and shews how it had in part its accomplishment in the non-rejection of many of them, and shall have its full accomplishment in the general conversion of that Nation in the Ages yet to come. See *Rom. II. 1, 16, 25*. So that this cannot be the meaning of the Apostle, because

cause their present standing in their Covenant-relation with God, from which they were now cut off, was not upon the meer account of their natural descent from *Abraham*, and the Promise, according to the true intent of God in it, doth still appertain to them, notwithstanding their rejection, therefore we must necessarily understand the Apostle, according to the sense and meaning afore given.

I come now to the second thing promised, and that is to shew, that this Text of the Apostle rightly understood, and taken in conjunction with the Context, is so far from carrying any contrariety to what hath been affirm'd, that it adds not a little to the confirmation of it. Yea, I dare boldly say, that had there been no other Scriptures to prove the truth of it; my first Proposition would be, past all rational contradiction, established from this very Text; and my second Proposition may receive no little confirmation from it.

For let it be observed, the Apostle doth plainly grant, yea, implicitly assert, that some were the Seed of *Abraham*, and that as such, were the Subjects of that promise, who yet were not the Children of God, and in that regard

regard were not accounted for the Seed, whence it is evident, that the same persons might be the Seed of *Abraham*, and as such intended in that promise, and yet in another sense were not accounted for the Seed: they were his Seed, that is, the Seed of his flesh, or his natural Seed, and as such, had the promise appertaining to them; but they were not the Children of God, and in that regard not accounted for the Seed, that is, not intended in this promise, as the persons designed from eternity, actually to enjoy the good promised; and that notwithstanding according to the Apostles intendment in this term *Seed*, they were not accounted for the Seed, yet they were the fleshly Seed of *Abraham*, and as such intended in that promise, as the joynt Subjects of it, with others, here said by the Apostle, in a special sense, to be accounted for the Seed, is past all rational doubt evident from the Apostles answer to the forementioned Question, taken in conjunction with the Instances produced by him, for the proof of what he asserts in that Answer.

Let but the words be carefully observed: Saith the Apostle, *Neither because they are Abraham's Seed, are they all Children*, that is, the Children of God: Whence it is evident, that some are the Seed of *Abraham*,

Abraham, who were not the Children of God; and that when the Apostle grants, some were the Seed of *Abraham*, who were not the Children of God, his meaning is, that they had, as the Seed, or natural Children of *Abraham*, this promise appertaining unto them, is evident.

First, Because the Question he was to answer wholly concern'd the natural Seed of *Abraham*, and that as such, having that promise appertaining unto them, as before observed: hence undoubtedly when in way of answer to this Question he saith, because they are the Seed of *Abraham*, they are not all the Children of God, he must needs speak of the same persons that the Question doth concern, otherwise his answer had been no wayes pertinent to the Question.

Secondly, This is evident from the Instances that the Apostle produces to prove what he had asserted in this answer; and thus he instances in *Isaac*, and *Jacob*, and shews how they were elected, and in that regard accounted for the Seed; where the Apostle must needs have reference to some others coming in competition with them, in regard of their standing in a like capacity respective to the promise as externally made and declar'd to *Abraham*: plainly thus the
Apostle

Apostle must needs have reference to some
 others who were *Abraham's Seed*, and as such
 had a common external right to, and interest
 in the promises; with *Isaac* and *Jacob*; and
 these were *Ishmael* and *Esau*; did not the
 Apostle suppose and grant, that they stood in
 the like capacity; respective to these promi-
 ses, as externally made and declared to *Abra-
 ham*, with *Isaac* and *Jacob*, the producing of
 these two Instances had made nothing to his
 purpose, nor had been any proof of what he
 had before asserted, in way of answer to the
 Question proposed; for the Apostle to assert,
 that all that are *Abraham's Seed* are not the
 Children of God, and that by way of an-
 swer to the forementioned Question, and then
 only to declare how *Isaac* and *Jacob*, the one
 of *Abraham's Seed*, immediately proceeding
 from his one loins, the other of his Race and
 Posterity, were intended in this promise, as
 made to *Abraham's Seed* in their Generati-
 ons, as being elected, and not to suppose and
 grant, that there were some others, who were
 alike, either of *Abraham's* immediate Seed,
 or of his Race and Posterity, intended in this
 promise, who were not elect, had made no-
 thing at all to his present purpose, but would
 indeed have evidenced the quite contrary to
 what he affirms. Whence it appears, in as
 full evidence as though written with the
 beams of the Sun, that the Apostle doth
 grant,

grant , that both *Ishmael* and *Eſau* were the Subjects of this promise , the one as one of *Abraham's* Children, immediately proceeding from his own loins, the other included in the promise , as made to *Abraham's* Seed in their Generations, and consequently that the promise did belong to *Abraham's* natural Seed, as such, which undoubtedly establishes the truth of my first Proposition, and no way opposes, but rather confirms the second.

CHAP.

CHAP. VIII.

1 *second, third, and fourth Objection ;
against the foregoing Proposition re-
felled.*

Object. 2.

SOME object, That the Promise, wherein God
engaged to be a God to *Abraham* and his
Seed, cannot in that latitude and extent be
settled upon and confirmed to believing Gen-
tiles, because that Covenant Believers are now
under, is a Covenant wholly divers from that
established with *Abraham*; and when the Co-
venants are divers, the good covenanted cannot
be one and the same, at least the Subjects of the
one cannot lay claim to the good of the other, by
vertue of that Covenant they are under: hence
a Believer, as a Believer, that is, as *Abraham's*
Spiritual Seed, could not lay claim to the old
Covenant-promises, if not descended from
Abraham by *Isaac* after the flesh; so a Be-
lievers fleshly seed, take it either of *Abra-
ham*, or any other Believer, cannot lay
claim to the New Covenant Promises, unless
N born

born again,, and engrafted into Christ by Faith.

Now before I return a direct Answer to this Objection , I shall a little enquire what are the true Notions and Conceptions of the persons framing it, about that Covenant entred by God with *Abraham* and his Seed in their generations, that so rightly understanding their sense and apprehensions of that Covenant , I may return a more full and direct answer to what is objected. And thus, for ought I can yet understand , etither by the most serious perusal of their Writings, or by what I can gather from their words, they express and declare their Notions and Conceptions , we are now enquiring after; one of these two wayes.

First, That God made a twotold Covenant with *Abraham*, the one a Covenant of Grace, the other a legal or temporal Covenant, and that the Covenant of Grace was made with him, and his spiritual Seed, *viz.* Believers, whether Jews or Gentiles, without any respect at all to a fleshly descent, either from *Abraham* himself, or from any of his Seed.

Secondly, That the legal or temporal Covenant was made with *Abraham* and his fleshly Seed, and only with them, and that as continued in the line of *Isaac* and *Jacob*, and that this was the Covenant, the Jews, during the first Testament administration, were under, and the only

Cove-

Covenant they were under, as the fleshly Seed of *Abraham*.

Secondly, Others declare their sence and conception thus, That there was but one Covenant made with *Abraham*, and that was a mixt Covenant, consisting partly of spiritual, and partly of temporal Promises; and as this Covenant was a mixt Covenant, so answerably the Seed of *Abraham* must be distinguished off. There was, say they, his natural Seed, and there was and is his spiritual Seed, Now these hold that the Covenant, as consisting of temporal, or as some express it, domestick or politick blessings, was made with *Abraham*, and his natural or fleshly Seed in their generations; but the Covenant, as consisting of spiritual blessings, was made with *Abraham* only, as a spiritual Father, and with his spiritual Seed, that is, Believers, whether Jews or Gentiles. Now though our Opposites do thus variously express themselves, yet they all agree in the general, that only temporal blessings did appertain to *Abraham's* natural Seed, as such, and that spiritual blessings were wholly or alone promised to *Abraham*, in reference to his spiritual or mystical Seed; and some add, that the Covenant, as consisting of temporal blessings, was a typical Covenant, viz. a Covenant typifying the Gospel Covenant, under which Believers now are; though how to make sence of that notion, especially themselves granting a Covenant of Grace was now established with *Abraham*, with reference to himself and

his spiritual Seed, will, I judge, be a matter of no little difficulty ; but I shall leave it to the persons concerned in it, if any such yet there be. And thus I have given a brief, yet, I suppose, a full account of the Notions and Conceptions of our Objectors, about the Covenant now established with *Abraham* and his Seed in their generations, and come now to answer the Objections proposed : And for answer to it I shall do these two things.

First, Prove that there is no such real and specific difference between these two Covenants, as the Objectors suppose, and take for granted that there is.

Secondly, Shew that notwithstanding the Covenant made with *Abraham*, and that made with Believers, should be really and specifically divers the one from the other, yet upon supposal of the truth of what cannot be gainsaid by our Opposers, unless they shall in express terms contradict the Apostle, the second Proposition may be true.

First, For the first of these I shall do two things.

First, Prove that this Covenant, that God entered with *Abraham*, and his Seed in their generations, was a Covenant of Grace, and in particular, that this Promise of that Covenant, wherein God engaged himself to be a God to him and his Seed, was a Promise of a spiritual blessing.

bleſſing, a good tranſcending any temporal good whatſoever.

Secondly, Prove that this Covenant, now eſtabliſhed with *Abraham*, is the ſelf ſame Covenant, for the ſubſtance of it, made with Believers under the New Teſtament,

For the firſt of theſe I need ſay but little, becauſe others have ſaid ſo much : See Dr. *Winter* in his *Treaſiſe of Infant-Baptiſm*, as alſo Mr. *Ball* upon the *Covenant*, Mr. *Warren* and others ; and therefore in brief take only theſe three or four Arguments.

The firſt Argument of that Covenant, as eſtabliſhed with *Abraham* and his natural Seed, was not only a temporal or legal Covenant, or the Promiſes appertaining to his natural Seed, were only temporal Promiſes, then many thouſands, who were the actual Subjects of that Covenant, and the Promiſes thereof, might and did never enjoy any benefit by it, and that meerly through Gods not performing what himſelf had promiſed, without any default on their own or their Parents part : But none, who are the actual Subjects of the Covenant and Promiſes thereof, ever did or could fall ſhort of the good covenanted, meerly through Gods not performing what he had covenanted and promiſed, without a default either of the parties themſelves, or of their Parents ; Therefore this Covenant, as eſtabliſhed with *Abraham* and his natural Seed,

N 3

could

could not be a meer temporal or legal Covenant, or a Covenant consisting only of temporal blessings, but must needs be a Covenant of Grace, or a Covenant consisting of saving benefits and blessings.

For the consequence in the Major Proposition, that cannot be denied, in as much as many thousands, who were the actual Subjects of this Covenant and the Promises thereof, whether they were so, as they were *Abraham's* immediate natural Seed, or were so, as included with their Covenant-parents, in that phrase, in their generations, might and did die in their infancy, before ever they came to reap and enjoy any temporal benefit, by that Covenant or the Promises thereof. Now this could arise from no other head or spring, but only Gods not performing to them what he had promised: And if it should be said, Though God did deny to give them in that very temporal good contained in the Promises of that Covenant, yet they were infallibly saved; and so had only an exchange of a temporal good for a spiritual; though they had not that particular good covenanted, yet they had a better good, *viz.* the good of eternal life.

But to that I answer two things:

First, Grant it be so; yet they never had any benefit by this Covenant, or the Promises of it, the actual Subjects of which yet they were, neither could they enjoy eternal life by virtue of that Covenant, or any Promises of it, according

ing to the judgment of our Opposers, in as much as it was, according to their judgment, only a temporal Covenant.

But some will say, Though they had not salvation by vertue of this Covenant, yet all infants dying in their infancy, before they commit any actual sin, are infallibly saved, and consequently those whose case falls under our present consideration were saved.

I answer, Suppose it should be so yet.

Secondly, I say, That many thousands might live to commit actual sin, and yet die before they come to enjoy any benefit by this Covenant and the Promises thereof, supposing it be only a legal or temporal Covenant, and consequently might not only be deprived of any benefit by this Covenant, meerly through Gods not performing what he had promised to them, but might through their own sin fall short of any higher good, which may be supposed should have been given in lieu of the good of this Covenant. But now for any to fall wholly short of that good promised to them, especially when nothing is given in lieu thereof, meerly through Gods not performing what he had promised to them, is inconsistent with the truth and faithfulness of God, who hath stiled himself, A God keeping Covenant and mercy for ever; and therefore this Covenant could not, as made to *Abraham's* natural Seed, be a meer temporal Covenant, promising only a temporal good, but must needs be a Covenant of Grace, consisting of

spiritual Promises , as Justification, Adoption the in-dwelling presence of the Spirit, Life and Glory, &c.

Secondly, If God engaged himself to be a God to *Abraham's* natural Seed by this Covenant and the Promises thereof, and to have God engaged by Covenant to a people to be their God, be a greater and more excellent good, than it is to enjoy any meer temporal good whatever, then this Covenant was made with *Abraham's* natural Seed, as such, was not a meer temporal Covenant, nor the Promises of it, Promises of meer temporal blessings : But the Covenant was a Covenant of Grace , and the Promises of it Promises of spiritual blessings. But the former is true, therefore the latter.

The Consequence in the Major proposition is undeniable, unless any shall affirm, that there may be a good, greater and more excellent, than any temporal good can possibly be, which yet is no spiritual good, or which may be given to men no way interess'd in the Covenant of Grace ; if any such good can be found out, that excels any temporal good whatsoever, and yet is not a saving good , hath no reference and relation to the salvation of those that enjoy it , they will do something to the invalidating this Argument ; till then I shall take it for granted, that no such good is imaginable.

And for the Minor proposition , that is sufficiently evident from that, *Gen. 17. 7.* compared with *Psalms 144.* and the latter end : We see

see from this *Gen. 17.* that God did ingage himself, by the Promise of this Covenant, to be a God to *Abraham's* natural Seed, as such, *I will be a God to thee and thy Seed*; which Promise, as hath been proved, respects his natural Seed, as such, as the immediate and next Subjects of it; besides, according to the judgment of our Opposers, the Land of *Canaan* was given to all *Abraham's* natural Seed, immediately descending from him by *Isaac* and *Jacob*, setting aside *Esau* and his posterity, as the proper and special good intended in this Covenant, as respecting them. Now we see plainly, as words can make any thing plain in the world, God ingages by promise, not only to give them that Land, but to be a God unto them, *Gen. 17. 8.* And that to have God engaged by Covenant, to be a God to any people, is a greater and more excellent good, than any meer temporal good, is evident from that passage of the *Psalmist*, where, we see, he plainly prefers this good above any temporal good whatsoever; for having spoken of their happiness, who have the enjoyment of temporal mercies and blessings, he adds, as preferring this above all, *Yea, happy is that people, whose God is Jehovah.* Now how could the *Psalmist* prefer an interest in God above the enjoyment of all worldly felicity, in case it was but a temporal good it self, or a good that only referred to mans temporal happiness and felicity, or had no reference to any higher happiness than the things of the world have? Yea let me say, did this Promise import only a temporal good, their happiness,

happinefs, who had God, as their God, by virtue of it, according to the terms upon which it was now given, their happinefs, I fay, had been rather lefs than greater than the happinefs of thofe, whose portion wholly lyes in the things of the world; fo that the Pfalmift might better have prefixed this *yea* to the happinefs of others, than to their happinefs, whose God is the Lord, and might have faid, Happy is the people whose God is the Lord, yea, happy is the people who is in fuch a cafe, in refpect of worldly prosperity, as is before expreffed.

Object. But it may be fome will fay, This having the Lord engaged to be a peoples God, of which the Pfalmift fpeaks, is meant of their having him engaged as their God by the Covenant of Grace, and not of their having him engaged, as their God, by the Covenant made with *Abraham* and his natural Seed; and fo it is granted, that to have a covenant-interest in God, is a good, vastly greater and more excellent, than any temporal good whatsoever.

But to that I answer, The Pfalmift fpeaks of a covenant-interest absolutely, without diftinguifhing of the Covenant conveying that interest; and where the Scripture doth not diftinguifh, we ought not; and confequently the Scripture preferring a covenant-interest in God above all outward and worldly felicity whatsoever, we may and ought to conclude, there is no covenant-interest, but what doth fo vastly excel

excel any temporal good whatsoever ; and consequently, that the interest the natural Seed of *Abraham* had in God , was a good transcending any temporal good , and answerably must needs be a spiritual good ; whence it will undeniably follow, that this Covenant conveying this interest in God unto them , was a Covenant of Grace , and that this promise was a promise of a spiritual and saving good.

Third Argument , If that Promise of the Covenant entred with *Abraham* and his natural Seed, as such, which according to the letter and outward face of the words, did intend and point to a meer temporal good, did yet, according to a more inward sence and meaning of the Holy Ghost in it, intend a spiritual good, typified by that temporal good, then that Promise, which according to the letter and outward face of the words, did intend and point to a spiritual good, must needs be understood of that spiritual good, which, according to the letter and outward face of the words, it did intend and point to , and consequently that Covenant must needs be a Covenant of spiritual blessings : but the former is true , therefore the latter. For the Consequence in the Major Proposition of the Protyllogism, I suppose, it will not be denied by any that are Masters of their own Reason , if that promise of the Land of *Canaan* , which in the letter, and according to the outward face of the words, intended only a temporal good, (for *Canaan*, according to the letter, was but a temporal

ral good.) Now if that Promise, according to a more inward sence of the Holy Ghost, intended a spiritual good, surely that Promise, of God being a God, which in the letter, and according to the outward face of the word, intends a spiritual good, must needs be understood of that good it did in the letter and outward face of the words intend; and for the antecedent, that I suppose will be denied, *viz.* that that promise of *Canaan* did, according to a more inward sence of the Holy Ghost, intend and point to a spiritual good; but this is so evident, that it doth indeed admit of no contradiction, from those who will not professedly set themselves to oppose the Scriptures: See *Heb. 11. 9, 10. He looked for a City, whose Maker and Builder is God.* By what warrant did he look for this City? Doubtless by the warrant of this Promise of the Land of *Canaan*; but for this see *Mr. Carter, in his Abraham's Covenant opened*, page 23, 43. See also *Mr. Tombs his Exercitation*, page 2. Now then both parts of the Prosyllogism being true, it will undeniably follow, that this Covenant, as made with *Abraham* and his natural seed, was a Covenant of Grace, or did consist of spiritual Promises; and in particular, that that Promise, wherein God ingaged himself to be a God to *Abraham* and his Seed, was a Promise of saving Grace.

The fourth Argument, That this Promise of the Covenant in particular, wherein God ingaged himself to be a God to *Abraham* and his Seed,

seed, as it did respect his natural Seed, as such,
 did intend and import a spiritual good, or was a
 promise, as some speak, of saving Grace, that
 did intend such a spiritual blessing, as had a
 direct reference to future salvation: I prove
 thus, viz. Because it did, as it doth respect, or
 was made to *Abraham's* mystical Seed, intend,
 as is confessed by all, a spiritual good, whence we
 argue; If all Promises made in the same words,
 terms, and expressions to divers persons severally
 and particularly considered, do alwayes signifie
 and intend one and the same good, as made to
 one, that they do as made to another, unless God
 himself hath some where or some way declared
 his sence and meaning in them to be divers, as
 made to one, from what it is as made to another,
 and this Promise in particular be made in the
 same words, terms and expressions to *Abraham's*
 natural Seed, that it is as made to his mystical
 Seed, and God hath no where or no way declar-
 ed his sence and meaning in it, as made to his
 natural Seed, to be divers from what it is, as
 made to his mystical Seed, then it must needs
 intend and signifie one and the same good, as
 made to the one; that it doth as made to the
 other, and consequently it signifying and intend-
 ing a spiritual good, as made to his mystical
 Seed, must needs intend a spiritual good as
 made to his natural Seed: But the former
 is true, therefore the latter; That the Pro-
 mise was made to *Abraham's* whole Seed, whe-
 ther natural, taking that phrase in the sence be-
 fore opened, or mystical, hath been sufficiently
 proved

proved already ; and that it did intend a spiritual good, or was a promise of saving Grace, as made to his mystical Seed, is not denied by our Opposers. Now let it be either shewed where or by what way God hath declared his sence and meaning in it, as it was made to *Abraham's* natural Seed, to be diverse from what it is, as made to his mystical Seed, or let it be proved, that the Promise made, as before expressed, may carry a sence and signification, as made to one, different from what it doth as made to another : This latter, I judge, will not be attempted, the attempting of it will be but an attempt to raze the foundation of all the comfort of Christians, and whether God hath any where or any way declared his sence and meaning in it, as made to *Abraham's* natural Seed, to be diverse from what it is, as made to his mystical, shall be considered by and by ; in the mean time we may evidently see, that this Covenant, as made with *Abraham's* natural Seed, and that as such was a Covenant of Grace ; or did consist of Promises of spiritual and saving blessings ; and from what hath been said, it evidently appears, there is no such real and specifical difference between that Covenant made with *Abraham*, and that Believers are under, as this Objection doth suppose and take for granted ; it evidently appears, they are not specifically two Covenants, but *quoad substantiam*, one and the same : Now the foundation of this Objection being removed, the Objection falls to the ground, and hath no weight in it.

Secondly, That this Covenant now made with *Abraham* and his Seed, is one and the same for substance that Believers, under the Gospel administration are under : This I evidence by these two Arguments.

First, If this Covenant made with *Abraham* and his Seed was not disannulled, either by the Law, or by or together with any change or alteration God hath made in his administrations, with reference to his Church in after times, then it was never disannulled, but is still in being, and consequently the same in substance with that Covenant, according unto which God doth dispence and give out his saving mercies and blessings to believing Gentiles in the times of the Gospel : but the former is true, therefore the latter. Certainly it cannot be denied, but that this Covenant is still in being and in force, yea, is that very Covenant, according to which God doth dispence his blessings and mercies to believing Gentiles in the times of the Gospel, in case it was never disannulled, unless any shall say, there is a twofold Covenant of Grace still in being, one a temporal Covenant, another a spiritual Covenant, which is not affirmed by any that I have yet heard of, or met with, and therefore the consequence in the Major proposition will not, I judge, be questioned by any : For the Minor proposition, viz. That this Covenant made with *Abraham* and his Seed, was yet never disannulled or abrogated, is expressly declared by the Apostle, *Gal. 3. 17. This I say, Brethren,*
that

that the Covenant which was confirmed of God in Christ, the Law which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disanul, that it should make the Promise of none effect. What Covenant the Apostle here intends is sufficiently evident, as from the foregoing verses, so from the whole context, viz. That Covenant made with *Abraham* and his Seed in their generations, as hath been before proved. Now saith the Apostle of this Covenant, the Law which was given four hundred and thirty years after the establishment of it, could not disanul it; and let it be diligently observed, that in case this Covenant had been disanulled either at, or any time before the coming of faith, as the Apostle speaks, that is, at the laying aside the Mosaical Pedagogy, and the setting up the Gospel administration in the room thereof (and from that time since, sure none will pretend it hath been disanulled) it had been all one as to the design of the Apostle, as if it had been disanulled by the Law, had it been disanulled at the setting up, yea, or were to have been disanulled, during the dispensation of the Gospel, under which we are : The Apostle could no more have proved, that the blessing of *Abraham* was come upon the Gentiles through Christ, as believed in, from the tenour of that Covenant, as we see he doth, then if it had been disanulled by the Law, for if it had not been disanulled by the Law, yet if it had been disanulled at, or consequent to the setting up of the Gospel administration, the tenour of that Covenant had no way proved what

that the Apostle designed the proof of : To what purpose should the Apostle have produced the tenour of that Covenant , to prove the necessity of the Gentiles incorporation into Christ, in order to their enjoying the blessing of *Abraham*, had it been now disannulled, in case it had not been disannulled by the Law; so that it is past all doubt , that that Covenant was not disannulled, when the Apostle wrote to the *Galatians*, nor was to be disannulled, during the Gospel administration we are now under , and consequently there being but one Covenant , according to which the benefits and blessings of the Gospel, are dispensed unto Gentile Believers, it must needs be this very Covenant afore made with *Abraham* , and his Seed in their Generations, which is the thing to be proved.

Secondly , If believing Gentiles enjoy the saving blessings and benefits of the Gospel , as the Seed of *Abraham* , by virtue of that very Promise of the Covenant made with *Abraham*, and his Seed in their generations , then the Covenant made with him and his Seed is one and the same for substance with that Covenant , believers are still under ; but the former is true , therefore the latter : It is marvellous how it can enter into the heart of any man, that is master of his own understanding, to imagine , that there should be a real and specific difference, between that Covenant made with *Abraham* , and the Covenant Believers are now
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under , when it is by vertue of the fundamentall Promise of that Covenant made with *Abraham* that they enjoy all the good of the Gospel, & all the saving good they are by Christ made partakers of : Can they be under one Covenant and yet enjoy all the good they do enjoy by Christ, by vertue of another Covenant, really and specifically divers from that they are under and which is long since disannulled and abrogated? To affirm it it would be an absolute contradiction : And that they do enjoy all the good they have by Christ, as they are *Abraham's* Seed by vertue of this very Promise of that Covenant made with *Abraham*, is so evident throughout this whole discourse of the Apostle, that it needs no other proof, than the bare reciting of his words, see *Gal. 3. 29. If ye are Christs, then are ye Abraham's Seed, and Heirs according to Promise.*

But it may be some will yet object, Certainly, notwithstanding all that hath been said, there must needs be a real and specifical difference between the Covenant that the Jews were under during the first Testament administration, and the Covenant that Believers are under, during the new Testament administration ; for doth not the Scripture expressly call them two Covenants? doth not the new Testament frequently speak of a new Covenant that Believers are now under, in a contradistinction from the old,

To that I answer, That when the Scripture speaks of two Covenants, or speaks of a new Covenant established with Believers under the new Testament, it alwayes hath reference to that Covenant, made with the people of *Israel* at Mount *Sinai*, and never hath reference to this Covenant made with *Abraham*; the words are as plain as words can be expressed, see *Gal. 4.* latter end, *Heb. 8.8.* Yea, the Scripture is express that the new Covenant is the same that was first entred with *Abraham*; So that, I say, the Covenant of Grace we are now under, is not another Covenant, specifically different from this made with *Abraham*, but they are for the substance one and the same; and hence this Objection not only vanisheth, but we have an additional confirmation of the truth of what is affirmed in our second Proposition; and we might add,

5. A fifth Argument thus, If the Covenant be one and the same, then the Promises of it must, unless limited by God himself, run in one and the same extent and latitude; but the Covenant is one and the same, and the Promises are not limited by God himself; therefore they must run in one and the same extent and latitude: But the truth asserted is sufficiently evident, therefore I need not inlarge upon it.

I shall come to the second thing proposed in answer to this Objection.

Secondly, Notwithstanding the Covenant made with *Abraham*, and that made with Believers, should be really and specifically diverse the one from the other, yet upon the supposal of the truth of what cannot be gainsaid by our Opposers, unless they shall in express terms contradict the Apostle himself, this second Proposition may be true, and consequently the asserting and maintaining, that the Promise made to *Abraham*, in that latitude and extent, as to take in his natural Seed, as joynt Subjects with him of the same Promise, is given to and settled upon believing Gentiles, in the same extent and latitude, doth not necessarily require the asserting and maintaining the Covenant entred with him, and the Covenant entred with Believers, to be one and the same Covenant: for the clearing up and evidencing of this, let it be observed, that the Apostle doth in express words affirm, That if the Gentiles are Christs, they are *Abraham's* Seed and Heirs, according to the Promise, *Gal. 3. 29.* Whence it is undeniably evident, that believing Gentiles are Heirs to *Abraham's* blessing, or to the Promise made to *Abraham*, with reference to his Seed, as they are considered under that notion and consideration as his Seed.

Secondly, Which follows from this, that they are Heirs to that Promise, or the blessing contained in that Promise made to *Abraham*, with reference to his Seed, which blessing, as I have proved before, was the same with that which

which *Abraham* himself was blessed with : these two things cannot be gainsaid , but must be granted by all that will not in exprefs terms contradi& the Apostle.

Now then let me a little argue with our Opposers thus ; either that Covenant entred with *Abraham*, and entred with believing Gentiles, is one and the same , or they are two Covenants, specifically diverse the one from the other ; The first they deny , the latter they affirm, Well then, the Promise contained in it was either a Promise of a meer temporal good , or a spiritual good. Yes, say our Opposers, it was a temporal good , as the Promise was made to *Abraham* , with reference to his natural Seed. Well then the blessing or good contained in this very Promise, as it was made to *Abraham*, with reference to his spiritual or mystical Seed , is either a temporal or a spiritual good ; the latter here must, and I suppose will, be granted by our Opposers themselves : It is evident then, according to the Judgment of our Opposers, that the same Promise made to *Abraham*, with reference to his natural Seed , and as made to him with reference to them , only importing a temporal good, may be given to, and settled upon believing Gentiles , and that by the Covenant of Grace , and that as given to, and settled upon them, may import and signifie a spiritual good ; but it is the Covenant of Grace, that is made with believing Gentiles, is agreed on all hands ; that believing Gentiles are Heirs to that Promise made to *Abraham*, with reference to his

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Seed,

Seed, is expressly affirmed by the Apostle; whence it will undeniably follow, that either the Covenant must be one and the same, and the Promises thereof intend one and the same good, as made both with reference to *Abraham's* natural, and also his spiritual Seed, which is undoubtedly the truth; or else that the same Promise made to *Abraham*, with reference to his natural Seed, according to that Covenant then entered with him; and that as so made, with respect to them, may import only a temporal good, may yet be given to, and settled upon believing Gentiles, by another Covenant, and that as given to, and settled upon them, may import a spiritual good; and consequently that the Promise may run in the same extent and latitude, in which it was made to *Abraham*, as now it is made to believing Gentiles, though the Covenant, in which that Promise was contained, as made to *Abraham*; was really and specifically diverse from that that Covenant, in which that Promise is contained, as made to believing Gentiles; for if so be the same Promise, as simply and absolutely considered, may be given unto and settled upon believing Gentiles, by a Covenant diverse from that, according to which it was first given to *Abraham*, why may not that Promise be given unto, and settled upon believing Gentiles, in the same latitude and extent in which it was first given to *Abraham*; If the Promise be given to believing Gentiles, why may it not be given in the full extent and latitude of it? Certainly no rational account can be given. And here let it be

e carefully observed, that both we and our
 Opposers are agreed, That *Abraham's* blessing,
 & the good contained in that Promise, wherein
 God ingaged to be a God to him and his Seed,
 is granted to believing Gentiles; all the Que-
 tion is, whether it be given to them in the same
 latitude and extent, in which it was given to
Abraham and his natural Seed; whence it lyes
 upon our Objectors to shew some Reason why,
 supposing there should be such a difference be-
 tween these two supposed covenants, the Promise
 may not be continued in the same latitude and
 extent, in which it was at first given, as well as
 the Promise it self, absolutely taken, may be gi-
 ven or continued to believing Gentiles, not-
 withstanding that difference they imagine be-
 tween these supposed distinct Covenants, so that
 the granting the Covenants to be really and
 specifically diverse one from the other, no more
 opposeth the truth of this our second Proposi-
 tion, than it doth oppose what the Objectors
 themselves do hold; at least which they must
 hold, unless they will expressly contradict the
 Apostle in what he expressly affirms: and there-
 fore I say, upon the supposal of what the Ob-
 jectors themselves must grant, the affirming and
 maintaining the Promise to run in the same la-
 titude and extent to believing Gentiles, in
 which it ran in unto *Abraham*, doth not ne-
 cessarily require the affirming or maintaining,
 that the Covenant is one and the same: our
 Opposers must grant, that the Promise made to
Abraham, either with reference to himself, or

with reference to his Seed, and it is all one whether we take it the one way or the other, it is given to, and settled upon believing Gentiles, we say it is given to, and settled upon them, in the same latitude and extent in which it was given to *Abraham*, both in reference to himself and his natural Seed; and now supposing the Covenant believing Gentiles are under, should be really diverse from that entered with *Abraham*, how that should contradict what we affirm, more than it should contradict what the Objectors themselves must grant, is impossible to imagine. So that, I say, the Covenant is one and the same for substance; but supposing it were not, yet our Proposition might and would hold true.

Object. It is objected by some, That the Infant-seed of believing Gentiles cannot, without any shew of reason, be supposed to be taken in as joyned Subjects of the Covenant of Grace and the Promises thereof, with their Parents merely upon the account of their Parents faith in as much as we see plainly, that the Jew themselves, though they were the natural Seed of *Abraham* (whose Seed in reason should have enjoyed as great priviledges as the natural Seed of any believing Gentile) could not upon the meer account of their fleshly descent from *Abraham*, be admitted into the Gospel-covenant but for their unbelief were rejected, notwithstanding their relation unto *Abraham*, as his natural. Now say our Opposers, if so be, either the natural Seed of *Abraham*, or the natu

ral Seed of Believers, had been or were to be
 received into the Gospel-covenant, together
 with their Parents, meerly upon the account of
 their Parents faith, and had had, or have, as the
 Seed of such Parents, a right to the Ordinances
 and Priviledges of that Covenant, then the
 Jews, they being the natural Seed of *Abraham*,
 had had a right to the Gospel-covenant, and
 might, yea, ought to have been admitted into
 the Gospel-church by Baptism, by vertue of that
 their Relation to *Abraham*, as his natural Seed,
 and could not justly have been refused for the
 want of a personal faith and repentance of their
 own, they being, notwithstanding their want of
 a personal faith and repentance, yet *Abraham's*
 natural Seed, and therefore certainly the Jews
 had either wrong done them by the Apostles, in
 not admitting them by Baptism into the Go-
 spel-church, or else we must relinquish our plea
 for Infant-right to Baptism, upon the account of
 their joynt interest in the Covenant, together
 with their Parents; for can we think the Apo-
 stles would so highly wrong the Jews, as to deny
 them that priviledge which, as *Abraham's* Seed,
 they had a right unto? or can it be imagined,
 that they, though the natural Seed of *Abra-
ham*, who was such an eminent believer, and the
 Father of the faithful, should have no right to
 be admitted into the Gospel church, and yet the
 fleshly Seed of believing Gentiles should have a
 right to such an admission: And that which
 makes this Objection seem more weighty to
 some is, that they suppose we hold, that the
 Infant-

Infant-seed of believing Parents do stand related to *Abraham* as his Seed, and do baptize them upon that account : And how the Infant-seed of believing Gentiles should be supposed to stand related to *Abraham* as his Seed , and upon that account be baptized, when his own natural Seed could no longer bear the denomination of his Seed , with reference to the Promises of the Covenant of Grace , cannot be imagined, but seems to be matter of great wonder , yea, and amazement unto some.

Ans. I answer, What hath been already said, both for the explication of this term *Seed*, and for the removal of some Objections raised up against the truth, asserted in the foregoing Propositions, hath so far obviated and prevented this Objection, as that little more need be added for the removing of it out of our way : The Objection, as we may easily see, is grounded upon , and receives what strength it hath from a twofold Supposition.

First , A Supposition that we affirm, at least that it will unavoidably follow from what we do affirm, that *Abraham's* natural Seed , both immediately and mediately proceeding from his loins, had a right to the Covenant of Grace, and the promises, benefits and priviledges thereof, meerly by vertue of their relation to *Abraham*, as his natural Seed.

Secondly,

Secondly, A Supposition that we hold, that the natural Seed of believing Gentiles are, by vertue of that their relation to such believing Parents, accounted for the Seed of *Abraham*, and on that account to be baptised.

Now as to the former of these Suppositions, it will soon appear, to all that attend to what hath been said, that I am no way concerned in it, having affirmed, and I hope sufficiently proved, the quite contrary, *viz.* That the Covenant, as at first established with *Abraham*, did not constitute a Covenant-relation between God and any of his natural Seed, meerly as such, beyond those that did immediately proceed from his own loins, but that the right and interest that any individual or particular person of his natural Seed, during their Infant-capacity, beyond his immediate Children, had in the Covenant and Promises of it, arose from their relation to their immediate Parents; included with them in that phrase, *their Generations*, and that the compleating and continuance of that Covenant-relation did necessarily and indispensably require their own faith and repentance, so soon as grown up to a capacity inabling them thereunto, whence, as such; who in their Infancy had a right to, and interest in the Covenant, and Promises thereof, either by vertue of their relation to *Abraham*, as his natural Seed, thus, in respect of his own immediate Children; or by vertue of the relation to Covenant-parents, thus

thus, in respect of the Jews mediately descended from *Abraham*, during the first Testament administration, I say, as such, might, when grown up to years of maturity, fail in the performing the conditions of the Covenant, and thereupon be rejected of God; so they having lost their own Covenant state and relation, could not convey a right to, or interest in the Covenant and Promises thereof to their Children, their Childrens Covenant state and relation standing or falling with their own; whence it is evident that as neither the Jews themselves, as grown up, and as Parents, had any right to the Covenant, as administered under the first Testament but what depended upon their personal acceptance and performance of the conditions of the Covenant, as then proposed to, and administered among them, nor their Infant-seed any right of admission into a participation of the benefits and blessings of the Covenant, as then administered, but upon a supposition of their immediate Parents abiding in Covenant; so now the continuance of their right (considered as grown up and as Parents) to the Covenant and blessings thereof, as now varied and altered in its administration, depended upon their acceptation and performance of the conditions of the Covenant, as now proposed under this present administration, and as the continuance of their own right to the Covenant, and the priviledges thereof, depended upon their own acceptance and performance of the Covenant, as now administered, so their Childrens right

ght to, and interest in the Covenant, and privileges thereof, stood or fell with their own; and hence the Jews, as grown up to years of maturity, or as Parents, refusing to accept of and perform the Conditions of the Covenant, as now differently administered under the New Testament, from what it was under the Old, were personally rejected, supposing them single persons, and were both themselves and their Children (supposing their Children were in their Infancy) rejected from their standing any longer in their former Covenant-state and relation God-ward: So that this Supposition having no footing in any thing I have hitherto said, the Objection it self, so far as grounded upon it, no way concerns the truth asserted in the one or the other foregoing Propositions, and consequently I am not at all concerned to reply unto it.

Now for the other Proposition this Objection is grounded upon, I acknowledge my self concerned in it, and do freely grant, yea, positively affirm, That the Infant-Seed of believing Gentiles are to be accounted of, and numbred among *Abraham's* mystical Seed: what respect we have to that their mystical relation to *Abraham*, as his Seed, in the application of Baptism to them, will be more fitly considered under the last Proposition: But that they are to be accounted of, and numbred among *Abraham's* mystical Seed, I affirm, and it sufficiently appears from hence, viz. That *Abraham's* Seed in their
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generations make up but one mystical Seed; This is evident from Gen. 17. 7. where saith the Lord, *I establish my Covenant between me and thee, and thy Seed after thee in their generations, to be a God to thee, and thy Seed after thee.* So that Seed in their generations is expounded by God himself to be, *Seed after thee*; Seed in their generations makes up that one Seed: and to the same purpose is that of the Apostle, in Gal. 3. 16. He saith not, *To Seeds, as of many but, To thy Seed, which is Christ.* Whence it appears, that all the individual and particular persons, whether grown up, or Infants, that are included in that Promise, as made to Abraham with reference to his Seed, make up but one Seed, *which, saith the Apostle, is Christ.* Now that the Infant-seed of believing Gentiles, under the Gospel administration, as well as the Infant-seed of the Jews, under the first Testament administration, are included with their Parents in that phrase, *Thy Seed in their generations*, hath been abundantly proved already so that I say I grant, yea affirm, that the Infant-seed of believing Gentiles are to be reckoned of, and numbred among Abraham's mystical Seed.

Object. 1. First, That the Scripture still makes Faith the condition, or medium, of Gentiles becoming Abraham's mystical Seed, Rom. 4. 12, 16. Whence it seems evident, that Abraham is a mystical Father to none but Believers and his Seed are only such as are of the Faith.

Answer

Ans. I answer, The Scripture is not contrary to it self: Now we have seen, that under that phrase, *Thy Seed in their generations*, the Infant-seed both of Jews and Gentiles are included; and that this, *Seed in their generations*, is but *Abraham's Seed* after him: Whence it is evident, the Apostle in saying, that *Abraham* is the Father of them that believe, excludes not, but on the other hand includes the Infant-seed of such as do believe, as to be accounted with their Parents, as making up but one Seed; he is the Father of them that do believe, whether Jews or Gentiles in their generations.

Object. 2. Secondly, It is objected, That then we make three parties in the Covenant.

First, *Abraham*.

Secondly, His Seed.

Thirdly, Their Infant-seed.

Ans. In answer, We make but two parties, *Abraham*, and his Seed, the Infant-seed of Believers makes not a third party, but stands in the same capacity, respective to *Abraham*, that their Parents do, and he is to be looked upon as a common Father to Parents, and their Infant-seed, the several individuals, whether Parents or Infants, are all but the several members or parts of that one *totum*, that one collective body, *Abraham's Seed*: from all it appears, that this Objection, in part, concerns not me, and so far as it doth concern me, is no way opposite to what I have affirmed, but is
granted

granted without the least prejudice to the truth pleaded for.

Object: 3. It is objected by some, That Infants cannot be under the Covenant of Grace, because the Covenant of Grace promiseth divine teachings to all that are under it, the issue of which is the saving knowledge of God, which as Infants for the present are incapable of; so it is certain, that many of the Infants of Believers are never made partakers of; now if they are admitted into Covenant, and are actually under the Promises of it, they must needs be taught of God, and that so as to know him, at least they would, as they grow up to a capacity, be so taught of God; see the Promise, *Isa. 54. 15: Jer. 31. 34. Heb. 8. 10.*

Answer. I answer, This Objection hath been removed already, but yet for further satisfaction I shall lay down these two Propositions.

First, That some may be actually in the Covenant of Grace, who yet are not so taught of God, as savingly to know him: this might be evidenced from that distinction formerly laid down, concerning an external and internal being in Covenant: It is possible, persons may be, yea, it is certain many are, externally in Covenant, who are not internally in Covenant; the necessity of this distinction hath been already shewed, and the absurdities that would follow, in case it should be denied, declared. Now in respect

respect of such who are only external in Covenant, it is certain, though they are in Covenant, and under the promises of it, according to its true tenour, as so externally made, yet are not so taught of God, as savingly to know him, for when they would be, not only externally, but internally in Covenant.

Secondly, That this Promise made to the Covenant-people of God, assuring them, that they shall be all, from the least to the greatest, taught of God, so as savingly to know him, doth not infallibly secure the good promised to every individual person, to whom the promise, as externally promulgated and declared, doth, in common with others appertain.

And for the proof of this Position I would argue thus, If it do infallibly secure the good promised to every individual person to whom it doth externally appertain, it must be either by virtue of the universality of the terms, or by virtue of the nature and kind of the promise itself, or by virtue of the nature or quality of the good promised. That it is by virtue of the nature or quality of the good promised none can pretend, and that it is neither of the former ways I shall prove distinctly.

First, That it cannot be by virtue of the universality of the terms in which the promise is express, is evident thus, because indefinite promises may be, and many times are express in universal terms, and then, though the terms be
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universal,

universal, yet the promises may not be made good to every individual person, to whom, in common with others, they do appertain; *If I be lift up*, saith Christ, *I will draw all men to me*, *John* 12. 32. The terms are universal, yet the promise is an indefinite promise, he would draw many unto him. So again, *Acts* 2. 17. *I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh*: where we see again the terms are universal, yet the promise is verified only in some particular persons.

But here you will say, In this place the promise is exprest with a peculiar emphasis, *They shall all know me, from the least to the greatest*; and therefore it must needs be understood universally.

To that I answer, Whether we understand this phrase, *From the least to the greatest*, of age, or state, or condition, is not much to our present purpose; we find the very same phrase used, when yet the sence is only indefinite, thus, *Jer.* 6. 13. *From the least to the greatest, every one is given to covetousness*; which yet was not universally true of every individual person among that people, whether Infant or grown person, nor of every individual grown person, it only notes the mighty, and almost universal corruption of that people in point of Covetousness. So that every individual person, externally in the Covenant of Grace, and so in common with others, having this promise appertaining to them, shall be savingly taught of God, so as truly to know

now him, cannot be inferred, or certainly concluded from the universality of the terms it is express'd in.

Secondly, Nor from the nature of the promise; for if the nature of the promise do infallibly secure the good promised to every individual person in covenant, as before express'd, it must be either, as it is a conditional, or as it is an absolute promise; as it is conditional, it cannot be pretended, in as much as no conditional promises, as such, do infallibly secure the good promised to any to whom they do appertain; it is possible the condition may not be performed, and then God is disobliged from making good the promises.

It is true, you will say, supposing it were a conditional promise, it would not infallibly secure the good promised to all universally, to whom it doth appertain; but it is an absolute promise, and the absoluteness of the promise, taken in conjunction with the universality of the terms, doth sure infallibly secure the good promised to all universally to whom it doth appertain.

I answer, That the promise, though here express'd absolutely, yet is not absolutely absolute, as before proved; so though express'd in universal terms, yet may be and is an indefinite promise, indefinite promises being often express'd in universal terms; yea, let me say, that absolute promises.

mises , how universally, soever their terms are are yet to be alwayes understood in an indefinite notion, and the good promised is not infallibly secured to any individual or particular person, meerly by the promises themselves, but only upon supposition of the eternal purpose and decrees of God, to give the good so promised to this or that particular person : in respect of absolute promises , God hath reserved a liberty to himself, to give or withhold the good promised, in a commensurableness to his eternal decrees and purposes, and according as particular persons are elected and appointed to the enjoyment of the good promised , or not elected or passed by.

From all it evidently appears , that person may have a visible and external actual right and title to this promise , and yet never have the good promised in present possession, nor yet ever have it made good to them, and consequently it cannot be concluded from the absoluteness or universality of this promise , that the Infant seed of believing Parents are not in the Covenant of Grace, nor under the promises of it.

But let that suffice for our second subordinate Proposition.

CHAP. IX.

the third subordinate Proposition laid down; how handled declared. The first Argument for its confirmation proposed and prosecuted, where that Command, concerning the keeping of the Covenant, Gen. 17. 9. is largely spoken to.

[Come now to the third and last subordinate Proposition, viz.

That all those that are under, or are the actual Subjects of that Promise, wherein God engaged himself to be a God to Abraham, and his Seed in their Generations, ought, according to the will of Christ, to be baptized: all that are the Subjects of that Promise are the due and proper Subjects of Baptism: There may be, its true, a tender of the Promise to such who ought not to be baptized, they may refuse that tender, but to whom the Promise doth actually belong, the Ordinance of Baptisme ought, according to the will of Christ, to be applied.

This Proposition I shall endeavour to prove in *hypothesis*, or as applied to the particular subject of our main Proposition, *viz.* the Infant-seed of one or both believing Parents; and thus supposing, and taking it for granted (being already proved) that they are the actual Subjects of that Promise, I shall prove that they ought, according to the will of Christ, to be baptised, and that by these three Arguments,

First, If it be the duty of believing Parents not only to be baptized themselves, but to take care that their Infant-seed, as joynt Subjects with themselves of that promise, be also baptized, then it is according to the will of Christ, that not only believing Parents themselves, but their Infant-seed also should be baptized: but the former is true, therefore the latter.

The Consequence in the Major proposition is unquestionable, what a Believer is bound to take care be done, the doing of that must undoubtedly be according to the will of Christ.

But 'tis the Minor proposition will be denied, *viz.* That it is the duty of believing Parents not only to be baptized themselves, but to take care that their Infant-Seed, as joynt Subjects with themselves of the same promise, be baptized.

But the truth of this is evident from the express Command of God, *Gen. 17. 9. And God said unto Abraham, Thou shalt keep my Covenant therefore, thou and thy Seed after thee in thy Generations.*

Now that it may appear, that this Command doth constitute it to be the duty of believing Parents, not only to be baptized themselves, but to take care that their Infant-Seed be also baptized, I shall distinctly speak to these five things.

First, That by Covenant in this place is mainly, if not only meant, the Token of the Covenant, and by keeping the Covenant, the application and reception of that Token.

Secondly, That the Covenant that *Abraham*, and his Seed in their Generations, were, or were to be received into, alwayes had, and was to have a Token annexed to it.

Thirdly, That this Command requiring *Abraham*, and his Seed in their Generations, to keep the Covenant, obliges not only Parents to have the Token applyed to themselves or themselves to receive and bear it, but to apply or take care that it be applyed, according to divine appointment, to their Infant-Seed.

Fourthly, That as Circumcision was the Token of the Covenant during the old Testament administration, so Baptism is the Token of the Covenant under the New.

Lastly, That this Command doth equally and alike oblige believing Parents in their Generations, respective to Baptism, the present

Token of the Covenant, as it did the Jews, respective to Circumcision, the then Token of the Covenant.

For the first, That is past all rational doubt evident; God himself shews what he intended by Covenant, and what by keeping of that Covenant: When he applies this Command, as more generally laid down to *Abraham*, and his natural Seed in particular, verse 10. So verse 13. *My Covenant shall be in you flesh*, plainly declaring, that by Covenant he intended the Token of the Covenant, and by keeping of this Covenant, the application and reception of that Token, though not affirming Circumcision to be the only Covenant to be kept, and consequently not limiting the Command to it.

And here let us a little inquire into the sense and meaning of this term *Token*; the Hebrew *אוֹת* is usually translated by the Seventy *σημεῖον*, both the Hebrew and Greek signifie, *Signum tam nudum quam prodigiosum*, a sign both ordinary and prodigious, and so is exprest by the Apostle, *Rom. 4. 11. σημεῖον ἐλαβε περιτομῆς* and Sign or token here we are to take in a pure logical notion, and thus we may define it with *Austen*, to be, *Id quod seipsum sensui & preter se aliquid animo representat*: Or as a later Author, *Signum est quod seipsum sensibus & id cuius signum est intellectui aufert*: A Sign in this logical notion is, that which is obvious to, or perceivable by sense, and through the medium

of sense presents to the mind or understanding what it is a sign of : Whence it is evident , that this term, *Token or Sign*, is not expressive of all the uses or ends that the Token of the Covenant here commanded was designed or appointed to : the term abstractly taken, only expresses the general nature and design of that Ordinance , but expresses not the various uses and ends it was in particular appointed to ; what these uses and ends are, must be gathered from other Scriptures, wherein God himself hath declared them , of which I shall speak when I come to the fourth Particular.

But let that suffice in brief for the first particular to be spoken to.

Secondly, That the Covenant that *Abraham*, and his Seed in their Generations, were, or were to be received into, alwayes had, and was to have a Token annexed to it ; that is, it had, and was to have an outward Ordinance or Institution annexed unto the administration of it , which though of various uses , and serving to various ends, not expressly declared in that term *Token*, abstractly taken, yet might be denominated the Token of the Covenant. This is evident two ways.

First, *A priore*, from the Command of God, injoyning *Abraham's* Seed in their Generations to keep it.

Secondly, *A posteriori*, or *de facta* , from the actual

actual institution and appointment of such Token.

For the first, Let the words in *Gen. 17. 9.* be diligently observed, *And God said unto Abraham, Thou shalt therefore keep my Covenant, thou and thy Seed after thee in their Generations* Now God would never have enjoined *Abraham*, and his Seed in their Generations, to keep his Covenant, that is, the Token of it, had he not intended to annex a Token to it. And observe it, the Command lyes on *Abraham's* Seed in their Generations, without any limitation, and consequently is incumbent upon *Abraham's* Seed, while he hath a Seed upon earth. Hence it is evident, that as God intended to annex a Token to that Covenant, then entred with *Abraham* and his natural Seed, so he intended to annex a Token to his Covenant (whether the same, or another, it is all one as to our present purpose) into which *Abraham's* spiritual Seed *viz.* believing Gentiles, in after Ages should be received; we see the Command lyes upon *Abraham's* Seed in their Generations unlimitedly.

Now Believers under the new Testament, who hath been proved, are *Abraham's* Seed, and consequently must needs lye under the Obligation of this Command, whence there must needs be a Token annexed to the Covenant into which they are received, for otherwise they would lye under an Obligation to keep the Token of the Covenant, and yet have no Token appointed them

them by God, to keep which would be absurd : And that this Command is obliging to *Abraham's* mystical or spiritual Seed , is evident by this Argument.

The same persons intended in the Promises of the Covenant, are intended in the Command, injoyning the Token : But *Abraham's* mystical Seed, as well as his natural Seed, are intended in the Promises ; therefore they are also intended in the Command.

We evidently see, the Promises and the Command run in one and the same extent and latitude ; *I will establish my Covenant between me and thee, and thy Seed after thee in their Generations, to be a God to thee and thy Seed after thee* , there's the Promise : *Thou shalt therefore keep my Covenant, thou and thy Seed after thee in their Generations* , there's the Command.

Now if God hath not limited the Command to some of *Abraham's* Seed , then we must not do it : But God hath no where limited the Command to some of *Abraham's* Seed ; therefore must not we.

If any should say, He hath limited that Command.

Let that limitation be produced , and it shall suffice ; till then we shall conclude, the Command is of an equal extent with the Promise.

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Now there being a Command incumbent upon *Abraham's* whole Seed mystical, as well as natural, to keep the Covenant, that is, as God himself expounds it, the Token of the Covenant, there must needs be a Token to be kept.

Secondly, This is evident, *de facto*, for the Covenant under the first Testament administration that will not be denied, and for the Covenant under the new Testament administration, the truth of what I affirm will appear, when I come to shew that Baptism is the present Token of the Covenant.

And therefore thirdly, That this Command, requiring *Abraham*, and his Seed in their Generations, to keep the Covenant, obliges not only Parents to have the Token of the Covenant applied unto themselves, or themselves to receive and bear it, but also to apply or take care that it be applied to their Infant-seed. The truth of this will again appear two wayes.

First, From the Letter of the Command, *Thou shalt therefore keep my Covenant, thou and thy Seed in their Generations*. Now under this phrase, *thy Seed in their Generations*, both Parents and their Infant-seed are included; they are both included in the Promise, as hath been already proved, and therefore must needs be both included in the Command injoyning the keeping of the Covenant. Hence, that the Covenant
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be kept by the Seed as well as by the Parents themselves, is according to the express letter of the Command; which duty of keeping, as to be performed by the Infant-seed, can only intend their reception and bearing of it; and so far the Infant-Seed as well as the Parents are under the Obligation of the Command: hence an Infant, not receiving or bearing the Token of the Covenant, is said to have broken the Covenant, verse 14. because the Infants as well as the Parents are under the Obligation of the Command to keep the Covenant.

Now if so be the Covenant be to be kept, not only by Parents, but by their Infant-seed, it will undeniably follow, that Parents are to take care that it be kept by them, in as much as they, as such, are incapable of taking care of it themselves, the care must lye upon some body, and upon whom, if not upon their Parents? We see that God hath throughout the Scripture made it the duty of Parents to take care of, and see to the performance of his will relating to their children, as might be evidenced in variety of instances were it needful.

Secondly, The truth of this appears from the clear and express discovery that God made of his mind and will as to Circumcision, the ancient Token of the Covenant, and thus as God enjoined the token of the Covenant to be applyed to the Infant-seed of Covenant-parents, so he imposed the care of the application of that Token unto the Seed upon the Parents, *Every man-child*

child among you shall be circumcised, verse 10. He that is eight dayes old, shall be circumcised among you, verse 12. The Child in the application of the Token was passive, and though upon whom the care of the application of the Token to the Infant-seed was laid, is not expressly declared in this place, yet that it was upon the Parents is sufficiently evident throughout the Scripture. We see how angry God was with *Moses*, when the circumcision of his Child was neglected; and in that God so fully declared his mind in respect of Circumcision, the then Token of the Covenant, it is a full comment upon the Command, as more generally laid down, *viz.* That as in that phrase, *Thy Seed in their Generations*, he intended both Parents and Infant-seed; so that the care of the Childs receiving and bearing the Token of the Covenant (which is the whole of its keeping of it) did appertain to the Parents as their duty.

And hence let it be observed, that the will of God concerning Circumcision, shews us what is his will concerning Baptism, that as the one, so the other should be applyed to the Infants of believing Parents, as well as to the Parents themselves, and that the care of the application of the one, as well as of the other, lyés upon the Parents.

Where note, that I argue not from Anallogy, but only take that discovery God makes of his will concerning Circumcision, as a comment upon that Command injoyning the keeping of the Covenant, as more generally laid down.

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But not to inlarge upon this , by what hath been said the truth of the third particular sufficiently appears.

Fourthly, That as Circumcision was the Sign or Token of the Covenant, during the old Testament administration ; so Baptism is the Sign or Token of the Covenant under the new Testament administration. Where note, that when I say, Circumcision was, and Baptism is, the Sign or Token of the Covenant, I would be thus understood, *viz.* that Circumcision was, and Baptism is, that Ordinance or Institution that God then did annex, and now hath annexed to the Covenant, serving to, and performing of those various uses and ends, with reference unto those to whom it was, and is to be applied, that he proposed to himself, as the reason and ground of his annexing a Sign or Token in the general to the Covenant established between himself and *Abraham*, and his Seed in their Generations.

That Circumcision was this Ordinance or Institution, is expressly declared, *Genesis* 17. 10, 11.

That Baptism is the present Sign or Token of the Covenant will appear these two ways.

First, More generally, and thus : Unless Baptism be the present Sign or Token of the Covenant, the Covenant, during this present administration, is left wholly destitute of any Sign or

or Token at all; let the Sign or Token be produced in case Baptism be not it.

'Tis true, it may be it will be said, That the Covenant under, the present administration, hath no external Sign or Token annexed to it, neither is it necessary that it should; the Spirit is the Seal of the Covenant of Grace, and the more plentiful powrings forth of the Spirit upon Believers, especially under that notion of a Seal, makes an outward Sign or Token wholly unnecessary.

To that I answer :

First, That though Believers are said to be sealed with the Spirit, yet the Spirit is no where called the Seal of the Covenant, neither indeed can it in propriety of speech be so called; for if the Spirit were the Seal of the Covenant, it should be given to all that are under the Covenant, the contrary thereunto both Scripture and experience abundantly declare, the Seal of the Covenant must be as extensive as the Covenant whereof it is the Seal. Now take the Spirit as a Seal, that is, as given for that particular use and end, *viz.* to assure and ascertain the Subject recipient of it, of the good promised in the Covenant, and so it is certain he is not given to every one truly and internally in covenant for a long time, nor to some possibly while they live. How many live many years, and it may be at last dye without any sensible assurance of their covenant-state, or injoyment of
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the good promised; so that the Spirit cannot properly be called the Seal of the Covenant; he is rather (as I may so express it) a private Seal given by God to this or that particular Believer, according to the good pleasure of his own will.

Secondly, I answer, That to seal and assure to those who are admitted into covenant with God, their injoyment of the good promised is not the only use and end, with reference whereunto the Sign or Token of the Covenant is appointed.

Hence suppose it should be granted, that the Spirit is the Seal, yea, the only Seal of the Covenant of Grace, yet that doth no way oppose the truth of what we here affirm concerning Baptism, for though it should be not of that particular use, nor appointed for that special end which yet it is, as will appear by and by, yet it may be the Sign or Token of the Covenant, it may be of those other uses, and serve to those other ends that God did propound to himself, as the reason and ground of his annexing a Sign or Token in the general, to the Covenant; so that it is certain, the Spirit cannot be rationally supposed to be that Sign or Token of the Covenant, which *Abraham's* Seed in their Generations were enjoined to keep; and consequently, for ought what is said of the Spirit, unless Baptism be the present Token of the Covenant, it is wholly destitute of any Sign or Token at all, which that it cannot be, hath been

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proved

proved already : as for the Lords Supper, I suppose, none will ever imagine that that can be the Token here enjoined, if they should, their vanity will easily appear.

Secondly, This will more clearly appear, if we compare Baptism with Circumcision, the former Token of the Covenant; that Circumcision was the Token of the Covenant is unquestionable ; and hence look what Ordinance under the new Testament doth most fully agree with Circumcision, in regard of the uses and ends, which, as the Token of the Covenant, it was appointed for, and did serve unto, that must needs be the Ordinance designed by our Lord Christ, for the Token of the Covenant, upon the cessation of Circumcision : And here for the evidencing what is affirmed, I shall do these two things.

1. Instance in some of the more especial uses and ends whereunto Circumcision was appointed, and whereunto it, as the Sign of the Covenant, did serve.

2. Shew the exact agreement of Baptism with Circumcision, in regard of those uses and ends : Where let it be carefully observed, that it is no way necessary for the proving Baptism to be the present Sign or Token of the Covenant, that I should prove an exact agreement between it and Circumcision in all circumstances, nor yet in regard of all the uses or ends of the

the one and of the other; if it be evident, that their agreement be such as will evidence Baptism to be the Token of the Covenant, upon the cessation of Circumcision, it is enough as to my present purpose, and that may be sufficiently evident by their agreement in some things, though they should disagree in others, especially there being no other Ordinance that can with any shew of reason be pretended to be that Token, the application and reception of which is here enjoyed *Abraham's Seed* in their Generations; a little may suffice to prove, that Baptism is that Ordinance, when there is no other Ordinance that can, with any shew of probability, be supposed to be it.

I shall therefore only instance in a fourfold use and end, whereunto Circumcision, as the Sign and Token of the Covenant, was appointed, and whereunto it did serve; and then shew the agreement of Baptism with Circumcision, in regard of those uses and ends. The first and two last I shall do little more than mention, and a little insist upon the second.

First, Circumcision, as the Sign and Token of the Covenant, was the solemn Rite or Ordinance, whereby persons were admitted into, and incorporated in the Jewish Church, and by the reception of which they became actual Members of that Church; and consequently was that solemn Rite or Ordinance, whereby persons were incorporated in, and united to the mystical Body of Christ as visible: The proving of
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this, I suppose, is needless, 'twill surely be denied by none. And therefore,

Secondly, Circumcision was to seal and assure to the Subjects of it, their enjoyment of the good things, benefits and blessings promised in, according to the true tenour of, the Covenant, to the administration of which it was annexed: See this in a particular Instance, *viz.* Remission of sin, or the Righteousness which is of Faith: Circumcision was a Seal of the Righteousness of Faith, that is, it did seal and assure, to the due Subjects of it, the non-imputation of their sin, or the imputation of righteousness to them, upon condition of their Faith. Thus it is said of *Abraham*, *He received the sign of Circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of faith, which he had being yet uncircumcised*, Rom. 4. 11. The Apostle here shews us one special use and end of Circumcision, respective to all to whom it was duly applyed.

Object. But here it is objected, That to have Circumcision a Seal of the Righteousness of Faith, was a privilege peculiar to *Abraham* the Father of the faithful, and was not of that use, nor appointed for that end, to all to whom it was rightfully applyed: therefore it is said, *He received the sign of Circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of faith, that he might be the Father of all that believe.* And hence it may seem, that he receiving Circumcision under that notion and consideration, upon a reason and ground peculiar and

and proper to himself, the priviledge was peculiar and proper to him, and not common to any other with him, there not being the same reason and ground of their receiving of it under the same notion and consideration.

To that I answer two things.

First, Those words, *That he might be the Father of all them that believe*, depend not only upon the words immediately foregoing, but upon the tenth verse taken in conjunction with the former part of v. 11. he did not only receive Circumcision as a Seal, that he might be the Father of all them that believe, but he both had righteousness imputed to him while in uncircumcision, and also received the Sign of Circumcision as a Seal, that he might be the Father of them that should believe, whether circumcised or uncircumcised: So that he did not receive Circumcision, as a Seal of the righteousness of faith, upon any reason peculiar and special to himself, any more than he had righteousness imputed to him, upon a reason peculiar and proper to himself: And consequently, upon the same account that our Opposites appropriate circumcision as a Seal of the righteousness of faith to *Abraham* himself, and deny it to be of the same use to his Seed, they may appropriate the imputation of Righteousness through Faith and Circumcision it self to him alone, and deny that any of his Seed had Righteousness imputed unto them, or ought to have been circumcised.

Secondly, I answer, That the Apostle here rather speaks of the *finis cui*, than the *finis cujus* of *Abraham's* receiving Circumcision as a Seal: My meaning is this, *Abraham* received Circumcision as a Seal, not barely for the sake of that relation, of his being a Father of them that should believe, as it was a good benefit or privilege to himself, but he received it under that notion and consideration, *In eorum gratiam qui credituri sint*, for their sake to whom he should sustain the relation of a Father: And so the meaning is, He received the Sign of Circumcision as a Seal of the Righteousness of Faith, not barely that he might sustain the relation of a Father to all that should believe, as that was a good to himself, but that he might as a Father, or common person, be a pattern to all that should sustain that relation of Children to him, in regard of the good which they, as his Children, should receive.

Now then having removed this Objection I shall offer two or three Arguments to prove that Circumcision was appointed for this use and end. *viz.* to seal and confirm the whole Covenant to all to whom it was, according to the will of God, to be applyed.

The first shall be taken from the end of *Abraham's* receiving of it, as here declared by the Apostle: And thus I argue, If *Abraham* received Circumcision, as a Seal of the Righteousness which he had through Faith, that he might be the Father of, and as the Father of

pattern to all that being circumcised should believe, then to all that, being circumcised, did believe, their circumcision was and, ought to be looked upon and improved by them, as a Seal of that Righteousness they had through Faith: But the former is true, therefore the latter. For the Consequence in the Major proposition, I suppose, that will not be denied, it being past all rational doubt, that if *Abraham* received Circumcision under that very notion and consideration as a Seal, that he might be the Father of, and as the Father of, might be a pattern to all that, being circumcised, should believe as he did: Then look of what use it was to him, or to what end he received it; it must needs be of the same use, and appointed for the same end unto them, to whom he was a pattern as receiving it. And therefore 'tis only the Antecedent that can be questioned, which yet is so evident, that to understanding and unprejudiced persons the proving of it may seem wholly superfluous. That *Abraham* received Circumcision under this very notion, as a Seal of the righteousness which he had through faith, that he might be the Father of all them who being circumcised did believe, is expressly affirmed by the Apostle; all that can be doubted of is, whether he was, in regard of the use and end of it, as received by himself, a pattern to all to whom he was a Father: But now this is undeniable, in as much as his paternity or fatherhood, as I may so speak, in part, if not principally, consisted in his being a pattern and example to

all to whom he was a Father. This title of a Father is in a peculiar and special manner given to, and predicated of *Abraham*, in this very regard, that he was set up as the great pattern, according to which God would act towards, and deal with, all that should after believe, or be admitted into a covenant-relation with himself: hence in this very place the Apostle tells us, that faith was reckoned to *Abraham* for righteousness, which is all one as to say, righteousness was imputed to him through faith, when he was in uncircumcision, that he might be the Father of the uncircumcised, that righteousness might be imputed to them also, viz. according to the pattern set in *Abraham* himself.

So again, *Gal 3. 7.* *Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.* Mark, the design of the Apostle is to prove, that righteousness is through faith, from the first pattern set in *Abraham*. Now says he, verse 7. *Know ye therefore, that they which are of the faith are the children of Abraham;* and then closes, verse 9. *So then they which are of faith, are blessed with faithful Abraham;* that is, as they are blessed with him with the same blessings, so they are blessed with him after the same manner, viz. through faith. Now as *Abraham* had righteousness imputed to him through faith, that he might be the Father of all that believe, and, as a Father, a pattern to them, in regard of the imputation of righteousness: So he received Circumcision as a Seal of
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that righteousness, that he might be the Father of them that should believe of the circumcision, and, as a Father, a pattern to them, in regard of the use and end of Circumcision, which both he and they in common received : So that it is evident, that Circumcision was of that use, and appointed for that end, *viz.* to be a Seal of the righteousness of faith, not only to *Abraham* himself, but to all his Seed, during the continuance of that institution.

Secondly, That Circumcision was of this use, and appointed for this end, with reference to the temporal benefits promised in the Covenant, is evident from hence, because it could be of no other use, nor appointed for any other end, with reference to some of them. Hence, I argue, If Circumcision had some reference to the temporal good things promised in the Covenant, it was annexed to, and could have no other reference or respect but as a Seal, assuring the injoyment of them, then that must needs be its use and end, with reference to those good things promised : but the former is true, therefore the latter.

The Consequence in the Major proposition cannot be denied, for if Circumcision had some reference to the temporal good things promised in the Covenant, and it could have no other reference, but as a Seal or Sign assuring the injoyment of them, then that must needs be its use and end respective unto them, this will not be denied.

Secondly,

Secondly, For the Antecedent, that consists of two branches.

First, That Circumcision had some reference to, or was of some use, and appointed for some end, respective to the temporal good promised; this is evident from the indefiniteness of the expression, *The Token of my Covenant*; 'twas the Token of the Covenant absolutely taken, not of some part of the Covenant, but of the whole Covenant, and therefore must needs in its use and end have some reference to the whole good promised in the Covenant: But this, I suppose, will be granted by our Opposers, they generally affirming, that the special, if not the only use and end of Circumcision, did refer and relate to the temporal part of the Covenant, or to the Covenant as it was a temporal Covenant,

And therefore secondly, That it could have no other reference, or could be of no other use, with reference to these Promises, but only this. *viz.* To seal or assure the injoyment of the good promised: Take it of the Land of *Canaan*; for what use, and to what end could Circumcision be instituted, respective to that Promise, but to seal or assure the injoyment of the good promised, upon condition of the observation of the Articles of the Covenant? Whence the Conclusion is undeniable;: So that, I say, Circumcision was the Seal of the whole Covenant, we see it:

First, In respect of the spiritual good promised, as pardon of sin, the righteousness of faith.

Secondly

Secondly, In respect of the temporal good promised ; and that Circumcision did seal the temporal part of the Covenant , is not only evident from Scripture and Reason , but is the general acknowledgment of our Opposers themselves ; therefore I shall take it for granted, and upon that Supposition infer a third Argument, to prove that it was of that use, and appointed for that end, *viz.* To be a Seal, or an assuring Sign of the whole good, whether temporall or spirituall convey'd, and made over by the Covenant, and consequently was a Seal of the Covenant absolutely taken. And therefore,

Thirdly, If Circumcision, as the Token of the Covenant, was a Seal of some Promises contained in it, then it was a Seal of all the Promises of it : But the former is true, therefore the latter.

That this Covenant, now entred with *Abraham* and his Seed, was a spiritual as well as a temporal Covenant, or did consist of spiritual as well as temporal Promises, hath been already proved, Now that Circumcision was the Token of the Covenant, is expressly affirmed by God himself, *This is the Token of my Covenant* ; and that as the Token it was of that use, and appointed for that end, with reference to the temporal part of the Covenant, hath been before proved, and is granted by our Opposers, and therefore must needs be of that use, and appointed for that end, respective to all the Promises of the Covenant : *Ubi lex non distinguit*

non distinguendum est, Let any reason be shewed why it should not be a Seal, or an assuring Sign, of the spiritual part of the Covenant, as well as of the temporal part, till which be done, the indefiniteness of its reference to the whole Covenant, exprest by that indefinite phrase, *The Token of my Covenant*, is an undoubted warrant to take it, as of the same use, and appointed for the same end, respective to all the Promises of the Covenant, that it was to any : from all we see, that Circumcision was a Seal, or an assuring Sign or Token ; and that's the second use and end of Circumcision, the former Token of the Covenant.

Thirdly, The use and end of Circumcision was, to oblige and ingage the person receiving of it to keep exactly to the Articles of this Covenant ; hence is that passage, *Jer. 4. 4. Circumcise your selves to the Lord* : But this, I suppose, is granted on all hands, I shall not at all stand upon it.

Fourthly and lastly, The use and end of Circumcision was, to be a visible badge, to distinguish the people of God from all other people, and to be a visible Sign of their covenant-relation, or to be a Sign, whereby they did visibly appear to belong to God in Christ, in a contradiction from the rest of the world.

Secondly, That Baptism doth agree with Circumcision, in regard of these uses and ends,
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s sufficiently evident, and consequently must needs be the Sign and Token of the Covenant here enjoined, since the laying aside of Circumcision: Let us see it in the particulars.

First, For the first use and end of Circumcision, *viz.* Its being that solemn Rite and Ordinance, by which persons were admitted into, and incorporated in the Church, or mystical Body of Christ, as visible: That Baptism is of this use, and appointed for this end, is expressly declared by the Apostle, 1 Cor. 12. 13.

Secondly, For the second use and end of Circumcision, *viz.* to assure the party, to whom it was applyed, of the enjoymment of the good things, benefits and blessings promised in the Covenant. That Baptism is of this use, is sufficiently evident from that passage of *Peter*, 1 Pet. 3. 21. where *Peter* having spoken of the salvation of *Noah* and his house in the Ark, sayes he, *The like figure whereunto Baptism now saveth us*, and telleth us how it saveth, both negatively and positively; negatively, it is *not by washing the body from its outward filth*, but positively, by giving or effecting *the answer of a good conscience towards God, through the resurrection of Christ from the dead*. What the Apostle means by this answer of a good conscience, Interpreters are not agreed, neither doth it concern my present purpose to determine; that which I only intend is, that by the resurrection of Christ, through a right use and improvement made of Baptism,

Baptism, a believing Soul comes to have a good conscience, that is, an acquitting conscience. Now what use or improvement can be made of Baptism, in order to the cleansing and purifying the conscience, by means whereof it become good, as the Apostle speaks, but as it is looked upon, and applyed as a Seal, or an assuring Sign sealing and assuring to the Soul the remission of sin, through the purchase of Christs death, and declared valid and effectual by his rising from the dead: this use and end of Baptism is also clearly implied and held forth in the Apostles Exhortation to those trembling Jews, *Acts 2. 38. Repent and be baptized every one of you in the Name of Jesus Christ, ἵνα ἀφέσιν ἁμαρτιῶν, for or unto the remission of sin.* Now under what notion or consideration doth the Apostle exhort to Baptism, respectively to remission of sin? It cannot be under the notion of a proper cause, for Baptism is no proper cause of the remission of sin, neither is it so much as a necessary condition, as Faith and Repentance in the adult are; for then none could receive remission of sin without it; but that is false, as is evident in the case of the Thief upon the cross, and the like is the case of many others, who are converted immediately before death. Neither doth he exhort to it barely under the notion of a Sign, that phrase, *ἵνα ἀφέσιν ἁμαρτιῶν*, implyes some reference that Baptism hath to remission of sin, beyond what it would have, were it only *nudum Signum*, a bare Sign or representation of the remission of sins by the blood of Christ.

and therefore he must needs exhort to it under the notion of a Seal or assuring Sign : And for the further clearing up of this, let the case and condition of these trembling Jews be considered, as they had sinned in crucifying of Christ, and were under the guilt of that sin, and under an Obligation to suffer deserved punishment, so they were under a deep sence of that their sin, and that wrath or punishment due to them upon the account thereof. Now as the Apostle exorts them to repent (with which a saving faith in Christ must be supposed to concur) with a direct reference to their obtaining remission of sin, *in foro Dei* ; so he exhorts them to be baptized, with a peculiar reference to the pacification of their consciences, that they might not only have remission of sin in the Court of Heaven, but have that remission sealed and confirmed to them, to the quieting their afflicted consciences, or to the working in them good consciences : But that is a second use and end of Baptism.

Thirdly, For the third use and end of Circumcision, *viz.* To oblige and ingage the persons to whom it was applyed, to a due and faithful performance of all consequent duties required in the Covenant. This is true also of Baptism ; Baptism is not only a sealing or confirming Sign, but an obliging Sign, by it the person baptized is obliged to take God in Christ for his God, and give up himself to him, in universal and constant obedience to his will : This is clearly

clearly held forth in that Proposition *eis*, Baptism is said to be, *eis τὸ ὄνομα τῆς πατρὸς*, *into the Name of the Father*, Matth. 28. 19. *eis Χριστόν*, *Into Christ*, Gal 3. 27. But this, I suppose, will be granted on all hands, I need not stand upon it.

Fourthly, For the last use and end of Circumcision, *viz.* To be an outward Sign or badge of that covenant-relation the Soul was taken into with God in Christ, whereby the person was known and taken notice of, as visibly belonging unto God, as one of his covenant-people. This again is true of Baptism; hence those that are baptized are said to put on Christ, Gal. 3. 27. *As many as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ*, they visibly appear as Members of his mystical Body, as contradistinguished from the non-baptized; from all it evidently appears, that Baptism is indeed that Ordinance, appointed by our Lord Christ under the new Testament, serving to, and performing of those uses and ends, with reference unto which, a Sign or Token in the general was annexed to the Covenant established between God and Abraham, and his Seed in their Generations. But let that suffice for the fourth particular.

Lastly, That this Command doth alike oblige believing Gentiles, respective to Baptism, that it did the Jews, respective to Circumcision. As it obliged the Jews, during that first Testam-

ment administration, to be circumcised themselves, and see that their Infant-seed were circumcised with them; so it doth still oblige believing Parents to be baptized themselves, and see that their Infant-seed be baptized with them: This is evident from the consideration of two things in the Command.

First, The extensiveness of it; it reaches *Abraham's* Seed in their Generations, as we have fore proved.

Secondly, The applicability of it; as more generally laid down to Baptism, as well as to Circumcision: And for the clearing up of this, let it be carefully observed, that the Command obliging *Abraham*, and his Seed in their Generations, to keep the Covenant, meaning as before noted, the Token of the Covenant, did not at all intimate, much less determine, what that Token should be; it only constitutes the general duty of *Abraham*, and his Seed in their Generations, respective to the Token of the Covenant, whatever that should after be determined by God himself to be: the words are plain and express, *Thou shalt keep my Covenant, thou and thy Seed after thee in their Generations*; not thou and thy Seed shall be circumcised or baptized, but thou and thy Seed in their Generations shall keep the Covenant: Hence the Command, as thus generally laid down, obligeth no more to the application or reception of Circumcision; than to the application or reception

of Baptism, and indeed to neither of them, simply and absolutely considered; it only enjoined the application and reception of the Token of the Covenant, but did not determine what that was or should be; and had God only thus generally and indefinitely commanded the keeping of the Covenant, without specifying what this Covenant should be, for *Abraham* himself to have been circumcised, or to have circumcised his Seed, had been a Sin and an act of will-worship; but now when God had determined Circumcision to be the then Token of the Covenant, this general Command was to be applyed by him to that institution in particular, and his receiving of it himself, and applying it to his Seed, was warranted, yea, enjoined by this Command; but then that particular institution of Circumcision was laid aside, and Baptism instituted for the same uses & ends: that Command was no longer to be applyed to Circumcision, but unto Baptism set up in the stead of it; and doth equally oblige Christians to the application and reception of Baptism, as it did the Jews, during the first Testament administration, to the application and reception of Circumcision; the command only injoyning the observation of the Token of the Covenant, not determining what that was or should be; as it enjoined of it self neither Circumcision nor Baptism, so it injoyned both the one and the other, as they were determined by God to be the Token of his Covenant; so that we have as an expresse command, comparing this command with that, *Matth. 28. 19.* for baptis

Baptisme of Infants, as the Jews had for the Circumcising their Infant-seed; The command to keep the Covenant lying upon *Abraham's* Seed in their Generations, which, as I have said, is it enjoined Parents to receive or have the Token of the Covenant applied unto them, and unto their Infant-seed, so it constituted it to be the duty of the Infant-seed of Believers, to receive and bear the Token as applied unto them. So that what would we have more, indeed what can be more plainly spoken: would we have had God said, thou shalt keep my Covenant, thou and thy Seed after thee in their Generations. Circumcision before the Messiah come, and Baptism after.

I, you will say, had it been so exprest it would have prevented this controverſie.

But to what purpose should it have been so exprest? Is it not all one, *Thou shalt keep my Covenant therefore, thou and thy Seed in their Generations*, not determining what Covenant should be kept, and then for God first to institute Circumcision as the Token of the Covenant, and then lay that aside, and substitute Baptism in the room of it; the command still remaining in its full force, without the least intimation of a repeal: is not the command still legible, and is it not plain enough, it lyes upon *Abraham's* Seed in their Generations? And is it not evident, that believing Gentiles are *Abraham's* Seed? And is it not plainly exprest, that Baptism is the present Token of the Covenant, as Circumcision of old was? So that if we will

not call for a command, and when it is brought shut our eyes against it, here we have as an express command for the baptism of the Infant seed of believing Parents, as the Jews had for the circumcising their Infant-seed.

But yet for the further explanation, illustration and confirmation of what I have in the particular asserted, let two things be observed.

First, How the Lord doth vary the phrase when he comes to specify the Covenant the to be kept; 'tis not said, *This is my Covenant which thou and thy Seed in their Generation shall keep*, but, *This is my Covenant which y shall keep between me and you, every man-child among you shall be circumcised, and you shall circumcise the flesh of your fore-skin, and it shall be a token of the Covenant between me and you* verse 10, 11. So again verse 12. *He that eight dayes old shall be circumcised among you every man-child in your Generations*. A plain intimation, that he purposed a change in the Token of the Covenant, and that Circumcision should continue the Token of it, only during the first Testament administration, while the Covenant it self was to be continued in an especial manner in *Abraham's* natural loin and posterity.

Secondly, Let it be observed, That this Command stands not alone in regard of this interpretation we have put upon it, but hath its parallel: there are other commands in the old Testament

Testament that must be necessarily interpreted and understood after the same manner.

I shall give you a twofold instance in the Commands of the Moral Law.

First, Take an instance in the second Commandment, *Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven Image*. Now will any say, that this Command is only negative, doth only prohibit Idolatry, according to the letter of the Command. Surely 'tis agreed on all hands, that it requires something positive, *viz.* That the external worship that God himself appoints, be exactly observed and performed, according to the way and manner himself hath determin'd in his Word; and thus when God had appointed and established that worship, consisting in sacrifice, observation of dayes, and the like, in and by which his people, under the first Testament, were to worship and serve him, that command was to be applied to that kind of worship, and did require the exact observation and performance thereof, according to the way and manner declared by God himself. But now then that kind of worship was laid aside, and other Ordinances and Institutions appointed, in and by which the people of God were and are to worship and serve him: the Command is of alike authority as before, and doth alike oblige and bind the people of God, to the exact observation and performance of that worship now established, according to the way and manner declared in the Word, as it did oblige and bind the peo-

ple of God, under the first Testament, with respect to the worship then established: Though there be an alteration and change made in the particular Ordinances and Institutions, in and by which God will have worship tender'd up to him; yet the Command, as more generally laid down, as requiring the exact observation and performance of whatever worship is of God's own institution, is of the same authority and force that ever it was; though it doth not oblige us generally to the same acts of worship that it did oblige the Jews unto, yet it equally obligeth us to those acts and duties now prescribed by God, as it did the Jews to that worship prescribed unto them: The Command, as more generally proposed, doth not specify any particular acts or duties, in and by which God would be worshipped, it only requires in the general, that whatever act or duty God himself appoints, be exactly observed and performed, and that according to the way and manner declared by himself: the very same is the case of this Command, injoyning the keeping of the Covenant. The Command, as I have said, as thus generally proposed, specifies not what the Covenant is or should be, only requires the application and reception of the Token of the Covenant, and consequently to Circumcision when that was appointed as the Token of the Covenant, and during its continuance; but upon the cessation of that, to Baptisme, as that Ordinance which God hath declared to be the present Token of the Covenant.

Secondly, Take another Instance in the fourth Commandment, *Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.* Here is a Command more generally laid down, injoyning the keeping holy the Sabbath or rest-day, not specifying which day should be that rest-day. Now when the seventh day was instituted as that day of rest, this general Command was to be applyed to that particular day, and did require the keeping of that day holy; but when the Seventh day was laid aside, and another day, *viz.* The first day of the week, instituted by Christ as that rest day; now that Command, as so generally proposed, is to be applied to this particular day, and equally obligeth us Christians to the keeping holy the first day of the week, as it did the Jews to keep holy the seventh; hence we have no expresse command in the new Testament for the keeping holy the first day of the week, neither is there any need there should that command, to remember the day of rest, and keep it holy, being equally applicable to one day as to another, and God having determined the day, the command is to be applyed unto it as so determined by God; which again is the very case of this command, under consideration; it determines not the Covenant to be kept, but requires that the Covenant, whatever God determines it to be, be kept, and consequently as it first obliged to the application and reception of Circumcision, so now it obligeth to the application and reception of Baptism.

Now then to come to a close of this first Argument, we see the Promises are true, and consequently the conclusion is certain, namely, That it is the will of Christ, that the Infant-seed of believing Parents should be baptized.

CHAP.

CHAP. X.

The second and third Argument, for the confirmation of the last subordinate Proposition, proposed and managed. The several Instances of Households being baptized, considered.

The second Argument.

IF the Infant-seed of believing Parents were in primitive times baptized, either by the Apostles themselves, or by any others by their allowance, direction, or approbation, then it was or still is according to the will of Christ, that they should be baptized: But the former is true, therefore the latter. The consequence in the Major proposition will be readily granted on all hands. That which alone needs proof is this, viz. That the Infant-seed of believing Parents were in primitive times, either by the Apostles themselves, or by others, by their allowance, direction or approbation baptized. For the confirmation of which this one Argument may suffice.

If the Infant seed of believing Parents were by the Apostles owned and looked upon, as appertaining to, or as Members of the mystical Body of Christ, as visible, then they were, either by themselves, or by others, by their allowance, direction

direction and approbation, admitted and implanted into that Body by Baptism: But the Infant-seed of believing Parents were owned and looked upon by the Apostles, as before expressed: *Ergo, &c.*

Here again the Consequence in the Major proposition will be, I suppose, readily granted by our Opposers, and 'tis sufficiently evident by this Argument.

If Baptism was appointed by Christ, for the solemn admission of such into his mystical Body, as visible, as did appertain thereunto; or were Members thereof, and there was no other way or means appointed for the same end and purpose, then all that the Apostles did own and look upon, as appertaining to, or as Members of that Body, were, either by the Apostles themselves, or by others, by their allowance, direction and approbation, admitted and implanted into it by Baptism: But the former is true, therefore the latter; the Minor here alone needs proof, and that consists of these two branches.

First, That Baptism was appointed by Christ, for the solemn admission and implantation of such into his mystical Body, as visible, as did appertain thereunto, or were Members thereof.

Secondly, That there is no other way or means appointed by Christ for that end and purpose.

First, For the first, see 1 Cor. 12. 13. *For by one Spirit we are all baptized into one Body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond*

or free, and have been all made to drink into one Spirit. What may be objected from this Scripture against the baptism of Infants, shall be taken notice of by and by. All that I cite it at present for is, to prove, that Baptism was appointed by Christ, for the solemn admission of persons into his Body, as visible, which is sufficiently evident.

Secondly, That there is no other way or means appointed by Christ, for the solemn admission of any into his visible mystical Body: If any shall say there is, let them shew it and prove from Scripture what they affirm, and I shall readily grant the invalidity of this Argument; but that doubtless none will attempt to do, so that the truth of the Major proposition is unquestionable,

For the Minor, *viz.* That the Infant-seed of believing Parents were owned and looked upon by the Apostles, as appertaining to, or as Members of the mystical Body of Christ, as visible, This will be denied, and therefore must be proved, and I shall prove it by these two Arguments, both which being grounded upon express and positive Scriptures, will render the addition of more wholly needless.

First, All those who were by the Apostle owned and looked upon, and that as personally or particularly considered, as the actual Subjects of the Promise of Salvation, were owned and looked upon by them, as appertaining to, or as Members of the mystical Body of Christ, as visible: But the Infant-seed of believing Parents

rents were owned and looked upon by the Apostles, and that as personally and particularly considered, as the actual Subjects of the Promise of Salvation, therefore they were owned and looked upon by them, as appertaining to, or as Members of the mystical Body of Christ, as visible.

The Minor proposition hath been already proved; and as for the Major, that is evident thus, Christ is the Saviour of his body, *Ephes. 5. 23.* Now to be under a Promise of Salvation, is to be under a Promise of being saved by Christ: hence all that are under a Promise of being saved by Christ, must needs appertain to, or be of his mystical Body, for 'tis of his Body that he is the Saviour.

But two things will be objected.

Object. 1. First, That Christ is said to be the Saviour of all men, *1 Tim. 4. 10.* To be the Saviour of the world, *John 4. 42.* and therefore though it should be granted, that the Infant-seed of believing Parents are under the Promise of being saved by Christ, it will not follow, that they were looked upon as appertaining to, or as Members of his mystical Body.

Ans. To that I answer, that though Christ in a large sense may be, and is in Scripture said to be the Saviour of all men, and the Saviour of the world, yet no particular or individual person is actually, and that for the present, as personally considered under any Promise of being saved by him, (especially taking Salvation of spiritual and

and eternal Salvation) but such who are of, or do appertain to his mystical Body : therefore it is said of these *Ephesians* , before their imbrace-ment of Christ , *They were strangers to the Covenants of promise*, Ephes. 2. 12, They had nothing to do with the Promises of spiritual and saving Mercies ; and as they were strangers to the Covenants of promise , so they were without hope , without any grounded hope , interest in the Promises being the alone true ground of all hope of spiritual and eternal Salvation : so that interest in the Promise of Salvation, declares the persons so intèressed, to appertain to, or to be of the mystical Body of Christ, all others being strangers to the Promises, and therefore without hope.

Objec̃t. 2, Secondly, It is objected , That when it is said, Christ is the Saviour of his Body, it is only meant of his mystical Body, as invisible, and consequently , in case this Scripture will prove, that the Infant-seed of believing Parents, as having the Promise of Salvation appertaining to them , do appertain to the mystical Body of Christ, it will prove, that they do universally appertain to his Mystical Body , as invisible, which it will be said we our selves deny , and therefore this Scripture is impertinently brought to prove their relation to the mystical Body of Christ, as visible, which only speaks of his mystical Body, as invisible.

Ans̃w. To that I answer , This Objection will receive a more full answer by and by, where I shall meet with it again: at present I shall only say,

say, 'tis evident the Apostle speaks of the mystical Body of Christ, as visible, and not meerly as invisible ; for let it be observed , that Body and Church, in this discourse of the Apostle, are Synonimies , or words exactly answering one another in sense and signification : whom he intends by Body he intends by Church , and so on the other hand, whom he intends by Church he intends by Body : Now this Church or Body of Christ , of which he is said here to be the Saviour , was that Church or Body , of which the *Ephesians* were an homogeneal Part, that is, a part of the same kind with the whole ; hence the Apostle speaks of them , as joynt Members with himself of this Body, verse 20. for we are Members of his Body, of his flesh, and of his bones. Mark, he takes in the *Ephesians* universally and indefinitely, one as well as another , as joynt Members with him of this Body : So *Ephes. 2. 19. Now therefore ye are no longer Strangers and Forreigners , but fellow-Citizens with the Saints, and of the Household of God.* To be fellow-Citizens with the Saints, and of the Household of God, is all one with being of this Church or Body. Now it is evident, the Apostle did not suppose, that every individual person of this Church were Members of the invisible Body of Christ ; what he saith, *Airs 20 30.* plainly declares the contrary. Now then this Church or Body , of which the Apostle saith, Christ was the Head and Saviour, being that Church or Body, of which the *Ephesians* were an homogeneal part , and they not
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being supposed by the Apostle universally to appertain to the Church or Body of Christ, as invisible; It will undoubtedly follow, that he doth not speak of the Church or Body of Christ merely as invisible, but as visible. Christ is in Scripture said to be the Saviour of his Church or Body, as visibly considered, and the Infant-Seed of believing Parents being under a Promise of Salvation by him, or of being saved by him, they must needs by the Apostles be owned and looked upon, as Members of that Body of which he is the Saviour, none, as I have said, being under a Promise of being saved by him, but such as do appertain to that Body, of which he is the Saviour.

Secondly, All those who under the Gospel administration, and that as personally considered, are the actual Subjects of that Promise, wherein God engaged himself to be a God to *Abraham*, and his Seed in their Generations, were owned and looked upon by the Apostles, as appertaining to, or as Members of the mystical Body of Christ, as visible: But the Infant seed of believing Parents under the Gospel administration, and that as personally considered, are the actual Subjects of that Promise; therefore, &c.

The Major is undeniably proved, by that positive Assertion of the Apostle, *Galatians* 3. 16. *Now to Abraham and his Seed were the Promises made; he saith not, to his Seeds, as of many, but to thy Seed, which is Christ; that is, Christ mystical.* Now if that Promise were made

made to Christ, and to Christ only, as we see the Apostle denies it to be made to any other, it was not made to Seeds, but to Seed, to thy Seed, which, saith the Apostle, is Christ. I say, if this Promise was made only to Christ, it will undeniably follow, that whosoever that Promise was made unto, or to whom that Promise may by Scripture-warrant be applyed, as the actual Subjects of it, and that as personally considered, they must needs by the Apostles be looked upon and owned, as appertaining to, or as Members of the mystical Body of Christ; and therefore let none evade this plain evidence, to the deceiving themselves or others, by saying, that there are Promises made to others, that are not Members of the mystical Body of Christ. Let it be remembred, the Argument speaks not of Promises in the general, nor of any kind of Promises, but of this Promise in special; nor doth it speak of this Promise, as an indefinite Promise made to any sort or species of persons, collectively taken, where no single or individual person can be said to be an actual Subject of it, as personally considered; and therefore to produce any such Instances is wholly impertinent: as to the Argument in hand, let it be shewed, that any person, whether old or young, might according to Scripture be accounted an actual Subject of this Promise, and that as personally considered, who yet was not by the Apostles owned or looked upon, as appertaining to, or as a Member of the mystical Body of Christ, till which be done, which I shall not doubt to affirm

impossible to be done) we may undoubtedly conclude, that all those that are the actual Subjects of that Promise , as personally considered, were owned and looked upon by the Apostles, as appertaining to, or as Members of the mystical Body of Christ, which is the thing affirmed in our Major proposition. For the Minor proposition, viz. That the Infant-seed of believing Parents are, under the Gospel administration, such Subjects of that Promise ; this hath been already fully proved ; whence our Conclusion is undeniable, That they were owned and looked upon by the Apostles , as appertaining to, or as Members of the mystical Body of Christ.

Object. But it will be said, That by Christ here we are to understand Christ mystical , as invisible , and not as visible. The Promises are made to Christ, that is, to the real and internal Members of his mystical Body.

Answer. To that I shall answer these two things.

First, *Ubi Lex non distinguit, non distinguendum est* , Where the Law distinguisheth not we are not to distinguish. Now the Apostle tells us , the Promises are made to Christ ; not to Christ, either under this or that notion or consideration ; here is no distinction between Christ, as visible or invisible, but simply and absolutely, the Promise is to thy Seed, which is Christ.

But you will say, Though the Apostle doth not here distinguish, yet the Scripture elsewhere

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warrants that distinction; and it is certain, the Promises do not really appertain to any, but such as have a real union with, and interest in Christ, of whom his Body, as invisible, is constituted and made up, therefore we are to understand the Apostle, as intending only the invisible Body of Christ.

To that I answer, It is granted, that in order to a due application of this or any other Promise to our selves, and in order to our enjoyment of the good promised, we must not only look to a visible profession of Christ, which constitutes us of his Body, as visible, but we are to look to the reallity of our union with, and interest in him. But yet let it be carefully observed, that the Scripture presumes and takes it for granted, that as to particular persons, those who do visibly belong to Christ, are of his Body as invisibly, as well as visibly considered: Hence in all that it speaks to, or of the Body of Christ it speaks to or of it, simply or absolutely, as his Body, without distinguishing of it as visible or invisible. And let it be further carefully observed, that that distinction of Seeds intimated by the Apostle, whereof some have the Promises made to them, and others not, doth not respect the Members of the Body of Christ, as visible, as though some of them had the Promises made to them, in a contradiction from others, visibly of the same Body, who have not the Promises made unto them, but the distinction is either between such, who might plead an interest in the Promises as related to *Abraham*;

is natural Children, who yet cleaved to the Law for Righteousness and Life : Or between such, who though in word they did profess faith in Christ, yet did indeed fall in with, and embrace such doctrines and practices as did, *ipsa se*, forfeit and disanul their right of membership in the mystical Body of Christ, as visible, and such who did visibly adhere and cleave to Christ in faith and obedience, in opposition to the embracement or falling in with any such doctrines or practices. Now the Apostle affirms, that to these, and not to those, the Promise was made. Indeed this I shall readily grant, that the Holy Ghost would have all to know, that if any, while they keep up a visible profession of Christ, and offadhering alone to him in faith and obedience, should yet act short of, or contrary to that their profession, it was not their meer profession that would give them the actual possession of the good promised, they must act according to their profession, otherwise though the Promises, as externally promulgated and declared, are made to them, and they in *foro Ecclesie* had a right to them, yet it was none of the intendment of God, that upon the terms of a bare profession they should enjoy the good promised; but this I say, that the Promises, in respect of the external promulgation and declaration of them, are made to Christ mystical, without consideration had to that distinction of visible and invisible, the Holy Ghost speaking to or of men, by men speaks according to what visibly appear of them.

But secondly, I answer, That Christ here must needs be understood of Christ mystical, as visibly considered: This hath been touched upon already, and for further satisfaction, see Mr. *Cobbett* in his *Just Vindication*, page 57. and it evidently appears from hence, because particular and individual persons might ordinarily be known to appertain to, and be Members of Christ, as here spoken of by the Apostle. Now no individual or particular person can be ordinarily known to appertain to Christ, or to be a Member of him, as invisibly considered see verse 28. where saith the Apostle, *Ye are all one in Christ*; the Apostle speaks to the *Galatians*, and saith he, *Ye are all one in Christ*; and in saying they were all one in Christ, he must needs acknowledge them to be all in Christ; how could they be all one in Christ, unless they were in Christ? But sure none will suppose, that the Apostle did infallibly know them, to have been universally every individual person among them of the Body of Christ, as invisible, therefore he must needs speak of Christ here as visible, and not meerly as invisible; and besides, let the foregoing Arguments, to prove that the Infant seed of believing Parents, and that as such, are included as the actual Subjects of this Promise be well weighed, which supposing it to be true it will undeniably follow, that the Apostle here speaks of the mystical Body of Christ, as visible in as much as the Infant seed of believing Parents may then be ordinarily known to appertain to Christ, as here spoken of by the Apostle

And therefore whereas our Opposers affirm, That Christ here is to be understood of Christ mystical, as invisible, and thereupon conclude, that the Infant-seed of believing Parents cannot, as such, be supposed to appertain unto Christ, and consequently not included as Subjects of that Promise, said by our Apostle to be made unto Christ.

We on the other hand affirm, and I hope have sufficiently proved, that they are included as joynt Subjects with their Parents of that Promise, and upon that ground ought to be looked upon as appertaining to Christ, and consequently that by Christ here we are to understand Christ mystical as visible, and not merely as invisible.

Now unless our Opposers shall produce clearer evidence, that the Apostle doth indeed speak of the mystical Body of Christ, merely as invisible, then hath been produced, to prove the Infant-seed of believing Parents, and that as such, to be included in that Promise, we shall take it for granted, that he speaks of Christ as visible, & that the Infant-seed of believing Parents do appertain to, or are Members of his mystical Body as visible, and consequently, *Quod erat demonstrandum*, were either by the Apostles themselves, or by some others, by their allowance, direction or approbation, admitted and implanted into that Body by Baptism.

Now as a close of this Argument, it may not be altogether unseasonable to shew in a few words (it needs not many) what respect we

have to that mystical Relation, wherein the Infant-seed of believing Parents stand toward *Abraham*, as his Seed, in the application of Baptism unto them, the consideration of which I have before referred to the handling of this last Proposition, and I know not where to touch upon it so seasonably as here.

And for this let it be noted, that in the application of Baptism we have a direct and primary respect to their state, as joynt Subjects with their Parents of the Promises of the Covenant, the Covenant and Promises thereof being entred with, and made unto *Abraham's* Seed in their Generations, as with and to the Parents personally considered, so with and to their Seed as such: Hence both Parents and Seed are to have the Token of the Covenant applyed unto them, they being joynt Subjects of the same Covenant and Promises, they are alike to partake of the Sign and Token of the Covenant. Hence look what respect we have to the mystical Relation of believing Parents to *Abraham* in the application of Baptism unto them, the same respect we have to the mystical Relation of their Infant seed to *Abraham*, in the application of Baptism unto them.

The third Argument: If interest in the grand Promise of the Covenant, wherein God is engaged to be a God to *Abraham* and his Seed in their Generations; be alone and by it self sufficient ground, upon which persons may be thought to be exhorted and moved unto Baptism.

When all those, who have an interest in that Promise, may and ought to be baptized: But interest in that Promise is alone and by it self a sufficient ground, upon which persons may and ought to be exhorted and moved unto Baptism: Therefore all those, who have an interest in that Promise, and consequently Infants they having an interest in it, may and ought to be baptized.

The Consequence in the Major Proposition of this Prosyllogism cannot be denied; for if a Minister may exhort or move one to be baptized upon this sole ground, that he hath an interest in that Promise, he may and ought to apply Baptism to him upon that sole ground; otherwise persons might be duly exhorted to a duty, which would be unlawful for them to practice, which would be absurd.

Therefore 'tis the Minor only which, I suppose, will be denied, which yet, I judge, will be granted by the major part of our Opposers; and for the satisfaction of others, let these two Scriptures be compared together, and well weighed, *Gen. 17. 9. Acts 2. 38, 39.* saith God to Abraham, *Thou shalt keep my Covenant, therefore thou and thy Seed in their Generations:* saith the Apostle, *Repent and be baptized every one of you for the remission of sin, for the Promise is to you and to your Children.* Now let it be diligently observed, how the Holy Ghost grounds the Command or Exhortation to keep the Covenant, that is, the Token of the Covenant, upon interest in, and right to the Promises of the

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Covenant,

Covenant, *I will be thy God*, saith the Lord to Abraham, *and the God of thy Seed in their Generations*, *thou shalt keep my Covenant therefore thou and thy Seed in their Generations*. Now to what end or purpose can it be imagined, that the Command to keep the Covenant should be ushered in with a *therefore*, had not the Command some reference to the Promises immediately afore proposed? And what reference can it be imagined to have but this, that God's vouchsafement of these Promises was the ground and foundation of the Command? The Command was given upon no other account or consideration, but their interest in the foregoing Promises, and the use the thing commanded should be of to them, respective to these Promises, so that I say, the Command is grounded upon their interest in the Promises; having these Promises, *Thou shalt therefore keep my Covenant*: In like manner the Apostle grounds his Exhortation to Baptism, the present Token of the Covenant, or enforceth it by the consideration of right to, and interest in the Promise, be baptized, for *the Promise is unto you*: And that the truth of what we affirm may more fully appear, let us enquire into two things.

First, What Promise it was the Apostle saith was *unto them*.

Secondly, What the meaning of the Apostle is in these words, *The Promise is unto you*.

First, For the first, And thus the Promise here said by the Apostle to be unto them, must needs be some Promise, which is common to all that are called of God, and yet peculiar and proper to them and their Children: hence it could not be either the Promise of sending Christ, or the Promise of the extraordinary gift of the Spirit; for as the former is not proper and peculiar to such as God calls, so the latter is not common to them all, and therefore it must needs be either that grand Promise of the Covenant, or some other of the essence and substance of the Covenant, as remission of sin, or the like, which is all one as to our present purpose.

Secondly, For the second, And thus I suppose all parties must necessarily and answerably do concenter in one of these two interpretations, either that the Apostles meaning is, that the Promise was to them, so as that they had a present actual and personal interest in it, which seems most agreeable to the letter of the words; or else that at present the Promise was to them only, by way of offer and tender, but would be unto them, so as that they should have an actual and personal interest in it, upon the Lords calling of them, or which is all one, upon their repentance; and that the Apostle doth eye and intend their personal interest in the Promise, either as at present, according to the first sense of the words, or future, to be obtained by their repentance, according to the latter, is evident; because otherwise the having of the Promise

to them, would have been no sufficient ground for the Apostles Exhortation to Baptism, neither could he rationally make it a motive to them to be baptized; so that according to the latter interpretation of the Apostles words, 'tis as if he should say, the Promise is to you by way of offer and tender at present, therefore repent, whereby you shall have an actual interest in it, and thereupon be baptized; and that the Apostle exhorts to Repentance only, and not both to Baptism and Repentance; in order to their having an actual interest in the Promise, is past all doubt, in as much as Baptism must necessarily follow upon, and not precede interest in the Promise, as a means either by it self, or as a joyned means with Repentance, to obtain that interest; so that, I say, his meaning must be this, repent, that you may have an interest in the Promise, and upon your repentance be baptized for the remission of sin, for then the Promise is to you, that is, you then will have an actual right to, and interest in it: So that take the meaning of the Apostle which way you will, it is all one as to my present purpose, in as much as he grounds his Exhortation to Baptism upon actual interest in the Promise, or makes that the motive to excite and stir them up to Baptism: now interest in the Promise being the ground upon which, or the motive by which the Apostle presseth them to Baptism, it must needs be a sufficient ground for the application of Baptism; and consequently whoever hath an interest in the Promise may duly and rightly have Baptism applied unto them.

Object.

Object. But it will be objected, The Apostle conjoyns Repentance and Baptisme in his Exhortation, and therefore they cannot be separated in practice.

Answer. I. To that I answer two things.

First, That though the Apostle conjoyns these two duties in his Exhortation, yea, though he should ground his Exhortation to the practice of them both upon the same foundation, *viz.* interest in and right to the Promise; yet that doth not necessarily imply an inseparable connexion between them in practice, two duties may be conjoyned in an Exhortation, and both moved to upon one and the same ground, and yet be separable in their practice, and then either of these duties may be pressed to and answerably practiced apart upon that ground, let us see it in these two duties of Repentance and Baptism, exhorted to by the Apostle: it is evident the Apostle exhorts to these two duties, with reference to two distinct ends; the one, *viz.* Repentance, with reference to their obtaining an actual interest in the Promise, suppose that were wanting, or with reference to the removal of a special bar, which at present lay in the way of their Baptism, supposing them to have a present interest in it: The other, *viz.* Baptism, with reference to the confirmation of their faith in, or their assurance of their enjoyment of the good promised, upon supposition of a precedent interest in the Promise. Now when these two ends are separated, as in respect of many they may be, sometimes Repentance may and ought

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to be pressed to and practised, when Baptism is unnecessary, as in case of a Believers falling into sin after Baptism: So on the other hand, Baptism may be exhorted to and practised, when yet Repentance, or the profession of Repentance, is no way necessary, as in the case of Christs Baptism; so in *John Baptist's* case, supposing him, he being sanctified in the womb, to have kept up the due exercise of Grace and Holiness from his infancy: Now in these cases these two duties are inseparable in practise, and in such cases either of them may be distinctly and severally pressed to upon this ground: what is a sufficient ground to bottom an Exhortation upon to the practise of two duties, must needs, supposing these duties are inseparable in their practise, be a sufficient ground to bottom an Exhortation to either of them apart upon, so that though these two duties are conjoyned by the Apostle in his Exhortation, and both exhorted to upon one and the same ground; yet they being separable in practise, either of them may be exhorted to, and practised upon that ground, according to the case and condition of the parties concerned in them: whoever hath an interest in the Promise, in case of the commission of any sin, may be exhorted to repentance upon that sole ground of his interest in the Promise; so whoever hath an interest in the Promise, may and ought to be exhorted to Baptisme, upon that sole ground of his interest in the Promise; an Exhortation to both, taken either conjunctively or severally, may be

be rightfully grounded upon the persons interest in the Promise.

Hence secondly, I answer, Let it be granted, that the Apostle exhorts those trembling Jews to repentance, as a necessary prerequisite to their Baptism, yet that was only either in order to the confirming, continuing, and visibly manifesting their precedent interest in the Promise, or removing that special bar, that lay in the way of their Baptism, 'twas their interest in the Promise that was the proper ground upon which the Apostle exhorts them to Baptism; Repentance is no further necessary unto Baptism, then as it is a part of the condition of interest in the Promise, and an external discovery of that interest to the Administrators of Baptism, as in the case of persons afore unconverted, or for the removing some special bar lying in the way of Baptism, as in case of Believers fallen into sin afore the application of Baptism unto them; in case interest in the Promise may be known, when Repentance is not upon such accounts incumbent as a duty, that is, a sufficient ground upon which to move unto and apply Baptism: And that which strongly perswades us to judge, that the Apostle exhorts to Repentance, not as simply and absolutely necessary to Baptism, at all times and in all cases, but only as necessary in their special case, and in cases parallel with theirs, is not only his grounding his Exhortation to both these duties, upon one and the same ground, thereby plainly declaring their rightful practice, as conjunctively, when the case so requires, so separately,

rately, or each apart by themselves, when either of them is not necessary or practicable by the parties concerned in them upon that sole ground ; but the whole reference that Baptism hath to the Promise, or the Souls interest in it. Baptism hath no necessary reference unto Repentance as already performed, so as its antecedency should be indispensably required, in order to a right application of it ; neither hath repentance any necessary reference to Baptism, so as that Baptism may not be administered, but upon supposition of its antecedency, as we see in the case of our Lord Jesus Christ, and *John Baptist*, as before noted ; but Baptism hath a direct reference to the Promise, and the Souls interest in that ; and therefore when repentance is required as a necessary prerequisite to Baptism ; it is only upon some of the accounts before mentioned ; 'tis interest in the Promise that the Apostle grounds his Exhortation to Baptism upon, and consequently interest in the Promise is a sufficient ground for the application of Baptism.

Now that the Infant-seed of believing Parents have a right to, and interest in that promise, hath been already proved, and receives no little confirmation from this Text of the Apostle, *The Promise is to you, and to your Children* : but my design is not, *Actum agere*, to do that which others have done already : I shall therefore only say, that suppose it might admit of a doubt, whether Children here are to be taken, *quæ* Children, as the Children of such Parents as these

these the Apostle speaks to, or whether their right to the Promise doth not suppose their personal Calling: I say, though this might admit of a debate, taking this Scripture abstractly in it self; yet comparing this Scripture with the evidence before given, that the Promise run in that extent and latitude, as to take in Parents and Children, surely it is past all rational doubt, that Children here are to be taken as the Children of such Parents, *the promise is to you and to your Children*, as they are your Children. But having so fully proved this, I shall add no more at present.

Fourthly, To add strength to the foregoing Arguments, let us take in those several Instances recorded in the new Testament, of whole Houholds being baptized upon the faith or conversion of one or both Parents: That, together with the Parents, upon their faith, their respective Houholds were frequently baptized; is in the new Testament fully declared: See *Acts 16. 14. 15.* so also verse 33. of the same Chapter, *1 Cor. 16. 16.* touching all which Instances let these three things be observed.

First, That it is very probable, if not fully certain, that at least some in or of some of these Houses, said to be baptized, were baptized not upon the account of their own personal profession of Faith and Repentance, but upon the account of their Parents Faith. For the clearing up of this I shall premise three things.

First,

First, That under this term *House or Household*, we must comprehend and take in all the natural Children that were, at least, then present, of these Parents, whose Houses are recorded to be baptized, we must take the Holy Ghost; according to the literal and proper sense of his words, where there is no necessary Reason; as here there is not, otherwise to understand him.

Secondly, That these Houses or Households may be rationally supposed to be considerably great; these phrases, *Households, all his*, and the like, note only a bare plurality of persons, but that they were in some measure numerous.

Thirdly, That not only Infants as new born, or in their infant-state, but such Children, who had arrived to a higher state of childhood, or were grown to some years of maturity, must yet be rationally supposed to be baptized, not upon the account of their own personal profession of Faith and Repentance, but upon the account of their Parents; and the Reason is evident, because such Children cannot be rationally supposed to be capable of attaining to, in an ordinary way, a competent measure of knowledge in the Mysteries of the Gospel in so short a time, as did intervene between the Parents imbracement of the Gospel and their own, and their Houses Baptism: And the Spirit of God, in his ordinary way of working, works according to the capacity of the Subjects he works in and upon, *Unum quodque recipitur secundum modum recipientis.*

pientis. Hence our Opposers must either say, that in their Houses there were not only no Infants, but none in their childhood, or else they must say, that when the Holy Ghost speaks of Houses, he intended only some particular persons in those Houses.

But for the first, It is altogether improbable, that there should be so many Families, and yet no young Children in them, there is a probability there might be Infants, but much more that there were Children, who though past their infancy in a strict sense, yet improbably baptized upon the account of their own personal profession: and as for the latter, that would be to recede from the letter of the Text, which ought not to be without evident necessity, whereas here is none at all. And for the further clearing up of this first Observation, let us take a more particular account of that one Instance of *Lydia's* house said to be baptized with her; the story you have *Acts* 16. 14, 15. And here let three things be attended to.

First, That it is evident her Household was with her at that Assembly of Women, to whom the Apostle preached; for after her own and her Household's baptism, she beseecheth *Paul* to go home with her, verse 15.

Secondly, It is evident this was an Assembly of Women, verse 13.

Thirdly, Here is no mention made of the conversion of any but of *Lydia* her self. Now let things have their due consideration; *Ly-*
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Lydia's Household was baptized, that is, all her Household, or all that appertained to her, that might be properly said to be her Household: it seems she carried her whole Household to that Assembly; this Household probably numerous or consisting of several persons, otherwise the particulars would in reason have been mentioned; here were no Males grown up, for it was an Assembly of Women: It is true, there might be Males in their infancy or childhood, it being no way unbecoming to carry such to such an Assembly, and notwithstanding them, the Assembly might be said to be an Assembly of Women. Now how improbable is it, that there should be a Family, a numerous Family, and not one Male among them; if there were any, they must rationally be supposed to be in their childhood; a great Family; and not one Infant or Child in it, but every one capable of a ready understanding what was taught, so as in a few hours to attain to a competent knowledge in the Mysteries of the Gospel, and these all wrought upon by one Sermon, when none else in the whole Assembly, for ought is recorded were wrought upon; yet that the Holy Ghost should only take notice of the conversion of *Lydia* her her self, and not in the least intimate the conversion of any in or of her Household, will not say, but that it is simply possible, that there might be the concurrence of all these things, but it is to me altogether improbable, that it should be so, it is vastly more probable, that some, if not all, that were baptized of her

her Household, were indeed baptized upon the account of her Faith, and not upon the account of a personal profession of Faith and Repentance that themselves did make.

But here it is said, That this Household of *Lydia* had some Men in it, as appears from verse 40. and it is probable some Women also, who were converted with *Lydia*, and they are the Household said to be baptized.

But to that I answer, That it doth no way appear that these Brethren, whom the Apostle, verse 40. is said to have seen, were of *Lydia's* Household, they might be Neighbours converted after *Paul's* coming to her House, who now came in to see *Paul*, or whom *Paul* before his departure went to visit: 'Tis evident by what hath been already said they were none of her Household, said before to be baptized with her; so that this one Instance, all things considered, makes it exceeding probable, if not evidently certain, that some in the Houses, whose baptism is recorded in Scripture, were baptized upon the meer account of the Parents Faith, without consideration had to their own personal Faith and repentance.

Secondly, Let it be observed, that it doth not appear, that any in or of these Households were converted antecedent to their baptism, as for *Lydia's* Household, there is not the least intimation of the conversion of any besides *Lydia* herself; yea, there is, as we have already seen, *tantum non*, a certainty, that at least some of her Household were baptized upon the account of

her faith, and not their own personal profession; and as for the Gaolers Household, it doth not certainly appear, that any in or of his, said to be baptized, were converted antecedent to that their baptism: It is true, there are two passages urged to prove, that they were such of his as were wrought upon by the Word as spoken by *Paul*.

First, It is said verse 32. *That they, that is, Paul and Silas, spake to him the Word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house:* Whence it is supposed, that all that were in his House, and consequently his, said to be baptized, ver 33, must needs be such as were capable of having the Word preached to them.

But to that four things may be replied.

First, It is uncertain whether this speaking of the Word, of which *Luke* speaks, was antecedent to the baptism of the Gaoler and his House; things are not alwayes declared in that order in which they were done.

Secondly, Suppose that be granted, yet it cannot be concluded from thence, that there were none incapable of having the Word spoken to them in his House: See a like Instance *Deut. 31.* verse last, it is said, *Moses spake in the ears of all the Congregation of Israel the words of this Song, until they were ended:* Now shall we conclude, there were no Infants or little Children in that Congregation? The contrary is evident, verse 12.

Thirdly, It is no way evident, that the persons in his House, to whom the Word was spoken,

ken, were numerically the same persons said to be baptized, all of his said to be baptized, seems plainly to intend different persons from all those in his House, to whom the Word was spoken.

But fourthly: Suppose the persons were numerically the same; yet the having the Word spoken to them, will not conclude their conversion by that Word, the Word may be spoken to those that are not converted by it; so that this passage doth no way evince the conversion of any in his House, besides himself alone, antecedent to his and his Households baptism: I do not say absolutely there were none, but it cannot be certainly concluded that there were any.

Secondly, The other passage urged to prove the conversion of the Household antecedent to their baptism, is that verse 34 where it is said, according as we read, *He rejoiced, believing in God with all his Household*; but the Greek runs exactly thus, *ὁ ἡγαμιάσατο, ποιοῦντι πιστευόντι τῷ Θεῷ*, *He-rejoiced with all his wife, he believing in God*: Now his house might rejoice, though none were savingly wrought upon but the Gaoler himself; and indeed the Apostles laying the ground of their joy in his personal believing, they rejoiced, he believing in God, doth plainly intimate, that as yet the Gaoler alone did believe, for why else should he not say, they believing in God, or at least that the benefit, which was the matter and occasion of their joy, did accrew unto them through his faith? 'Tis not

for nothing that the Apostle makes his personal believing in God the ground of the joy of the whole House ; so that it doth not certainly appear, that any in the Gaolers house did believe antecedent to their baptism.

And for the Household of *Stephanus* , there is nothing evidencing their or any of their faith antecedent to their baptism : 'Tis true, we read that his Household did addict themselves to the Ministry of the Saints, *1 Cor. 16. 15*. But whether these, said to addict themselves to this Ministry, were converted before or after his imbracement of the Gospel , and his and his Households baptism, is altogether uncertain.

Thirdly observe, That suppose some particular persons in or of these Houses , said to be baptized , might be converted antecedent to their baptism, yet from thence it cannot be concluded, that in other Houses it must needs be so also , nor yet that the Households , as generally considered, were not baptized upon the account of the Parents faith : as suppose there were any converted in the Gaolers House antecedent to their baptism, from thence it cannot be concluded , that any in *Lydia's House* were converted antecedent to their baptism ; so suppose there should be some of the Gaolers House converted before their baptism, yet to argue from thence, that Baptism was not administered to the Houses , as more generally taken , as the Houses of believing Parents , is a meer *non sequitur* : So that suppose it could be proved , which yet it cannot be, that some in or of some one or other

of the *Houses*, said to be baptized, were baptized upon the account of their own personal profession of Faith and Repentance, yet that would not overthrow the evidence that the Instances of any *Housholds* being baptized, as a *Houshold* of a Believer, gives in to the truth contended for; the probability of any one *Houshold*, yea, or any one in or of anyone *Houshold*, being baptized, as the *Houshold*, or as of the *Houshold* of such a Parent, carries alike evidence to the truth pleaded for, as taken abstractly in it self, as it would do in case there were the same probability, that all these *Housholds*, and all in them, were baptized, as such *Housholds*.

From the whole of what hath been said touching these several Instances, and that as taken abstractly in themselves, I shall not doubt to conclude, that there is at least a very great probability, that in primitive times *Houses* were, together with their converted Parents, baptized, and that meerly as the *Houses* of such Parents.

And yet further, for the making it more probable, that these *Housholds*, said to be baptized, at least some in or of them, were indeed baptized, not upon the account of a personal profession of their own Faith and Repentance but upon the account of their Parents Faith, as received into the same Covenant-state with them, let these things be considered.

First, How exceeding improbable it is, that in case none could be admitted into communion with the Body of Christ by Baptism, but upon a personal profession of Faith and Repentance, the Sacred Historian, writing by divine inspiration, would mention, and leave upon record, the baptisme of any one *Houſhold*, without giving the least intimation of the conversion of at least one or more in or of that *Houſhold*, that so the ground of the baptism of the rest might have been clearly inferred: That the Covenant, together with the Sign and Token of it, should be of the same latitude and extent in the administration and application of it, that it was under the first Testament, might be rationally expected by all men: hence it may be well supposed, that our Lord Jesus Christ, who is expressly said to be faithful in all his *House*, as *Moses* was in his, would if not have given some express and positive discovery of his will, as to the baptism of persons upon the personal profession of their faith and repentance, exclusive of all others, which our Opposers themselves will hardly affirm that he hath done, yet would have given in so full and clear an account of the Apostles practice in execution of their Commission, *To reach and baptize the Nations*, as should have evidently obviated all mistakes, in a case wherein mistakes so probably would be, when it is so evidently declared, that under the first Testament, upon persons taking hold of the Covenant, both themselves and *Houſholds* were admitted and incorporated into the Body of Christ,

Christ, by the then Sign and Token of the Covenant; and then declared in the New, that together with Parents, upon their imbracement of the Gospel, their *Houſholds* were admitted and implanted into the ſame Body (as the Apoſtle is expreſs in *Ephes. 3. 6.* that the Body is one and the ſame) by Baptiſm, the preſent Sign or Token of the Covenant, and no account is given of the perſonal faith and repentance of any in or of thoſe *Houſes*, at leaſt ſome of them, as the ground of their baptiſm, beſides the Parents alone. Sure none can deny, but here is a rational ground to ſuppoſe, at leaſt very probably, that the Covenant, and together therewith the Sign and Token of it, is of the ſame extent and latitude as it formerly was. Now I ſay, conſider how extreamly improbable it is, that the *Holy Ghoſt* ſhould record the Baptiſm of whole *Houſholds*, taking notice only of the faith and repentance of the Parents, without giving the leaſt intimation of the faith and repentance of any in or of ſuch *Houſholds*, thereby giving ſo clear a ground of miſtake, in caſe none under the new Teſtament adminiſtration ought to be admitted and incorporated into the myſtical Body of Chriſt, as viſible, but upon a perſonal profeſſion of their faith and repentance.

Secondly, Let it be conſidered, how the *Holy Ghoſt* doth vary his manner of expreſſion in his narrative of thoſe primitive tranſactions, when he ſpeaks of the baptiſm of *Houſholds*, he tells us, the *Houſholds* were baptized, together
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with their Parents , not giving the least intimation of the faith of any in or of those Houses, as the ground of their baptism; but when he speaks of more general Assemblies, or concourses of people, he speaks more distinguishingly, *As many as gladly received the Word were baptized, Acts 2. 41.* And why the Holy Ghost should speak so distinguishingly in one place and not in the other, is hard to say, unless it should be, because in respect of such more general Assemblies and concourses of people, consisting of grown persons, the personal faith and conversion of each was necessary to their baptism, but not so in respect of the Houses of believing Parents, but that is for these Instances, as taken abstractly in themselves: But now compare one thing with another, and the evidence is vastly more clear; for as considering what hath been said, to prove the interest of the Infant-seed of believing Parents in the Covenant and Promises thereof, and what hath been said, to evidence a right to Baptism to be of equal extent to interest in the Covenant and Promises thereof, it is undeniable to me, and I can hardly think, but it will be so to others, who will freely entertain Light when held forth unto them, that these Households were baptized, as the Houses of such Parents, upon the account of their interest in the Covenant; so on the other hand, when we see what hath been before said, concerning the interest of believing Parents in the Covenant, and concerning their right to Baptism upon that account, and then find whole Households baptized,

baptized , and that so very probably, to say no more , as the *Houses* of such Parents , it may much more strongly perswade us of that their interest in the Covenant and Promises thereof, and of their right to the Sign and Token of the Covenant. But let that suffice for the proof of our third subordinate Proposition.

What Objections the Truth we have contended for will meet with from the contrary minded, shall now be considered.

CHAP.

CHAP. XI.

Objections against the last Proposition answered. The conclusion of the whole.

Object. I.

Notwithstanding all that hath been said for the confirmation of the three foregoing Propositions, yet some may say, That it is not the will of Christ, that the Infant-seed of believing Parents should ordinarily be baptized (may be at least very probably concluded) from those various passages that do occur in the new Testament, wherein such things are declared to have attended the administration of Baptism, and such things are affirmed of, and required from the baptized in the primitive times, which cannot attend Baptism, as administered unto Infants, nor can be truly affirmed of, or rationally required from them. See 1 Cor. 12. 13, 21, 25. Ephes. 4. 16. Gal. 3. 26, 27.

Answer. This Objection will soon vanish, and appear to have no strength at all in it, if we consider these three things, which because they are so obvious to every one of a competent understanding, and at all acquainted with the Scriptures,

Scriptures, I shall need do little more than mention.

First, Consider that what in these or the like Scriptures is declared of, or required from the Body of Christ, or the several Members of that Body, as united and incorporated, by the means (whether internal or external) appointed for that end and purpose, agrees to, and equally concerns the whole Body of Christ, and the several Members thereof, simply and absolutely, in all times and ages; the Body of Christ is but one, successively continued throughout all ages; and hence it may as well be concluded from these Scriptures, that Infants never were, nor ever shall be admitted into this Body, (the contrary whereunto is most evident) as that in the primitive times they were not by Baptism admitted into it, as then existent in the world.

Secondly, Consider that it is a thing of frequent occurrence in Scripture, for things to be declared and spoken of, or to whole Bodies or Societies, and that in the most universal and indefinite terms, which yet are to be understood and applyed variously, with respect to the particulars, according to their respective capacities and concernments, in what is so declared or spoken: See this abundantly verified in that Speech of *Moses* to the whole Congregation of *Israel*, recorded in the twenty nine and thirty Chapters of *Deuteronomy*, there are some things spoken as universally true of them all: S. their standing before the Lord, in order to their re-
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newal of their Covenant with him, thus, *Deut.* 29. 10, 11, 12, there are other things spoken, which were alone true of the grown persons among them, and that but in part true of some of them, in whole true of others: Thus their seeing what God had done for them in *Egypt*, and in the Wilderness, some had seen both the temptations they had been tried with, and the Signs wrought before them in the Wilderness, but had seen nothing, in respect of a personal sight, of what God had done for them in *Egypt*: Others had seen, what God had done both in the Wilderness and in *Egypt*, and yet the same things are universally declared of them all, verse 2. So again, there are other things affirmed and declared of them all in one and the same expression, which yet were to be understood in a different manner, as applied to particulars: Thus of their entering into Covenant, it is said of them universally, *They stood before the Lord to enter into Covenant*, and yet they could not enter into it after one and the same manner, the grown persons were to do it personally, the Infants and Children, incapable of a personal covenanting with God, were entered by their Parents. Yet take one more Instance, that Command, to keep the words of that Covenant they were now entering into, is imposed upon them all universally, verse 9. *Keep therefore the words of this Covenant, and do them, that ye may prosper in all that you do*: Yet who will say, either that there were no Infants, or that Infants are capable to keep the words

words of that Covenant? So that we may see how variously, what is indefinitely, and in the most general and universal terms spoken to or of an Assembly, or united Body of people, as collectively or generally taken, is yet to be understood and applied to the particulars of that Assembly, or Body of people. And several other Instances, of a like nature with this, might be given: See *1 Cor 10.* begin. but I am willing to contract as much as may be: Thus in respect of the passages the Objection is grounded upon, what is declared to have attended the administration of Baptism, or what is spoken of or to the persons baptized, is to be understood and applied to particulars, according to their respective capacities and concerns in what is so declared and spoken.

Thirdly, Let it be considered, to whom, or for whose use the Scriptures were written, as also what is the special design of the Holy Ghost in those passages the Objection is grounded upon: And thus let it be considered, that the Scriptures were written to and for the use not of Infants, while in their infant capacity, but grown persons; and the design of the Holy Ghost, in the places mentioned, is either to instruct and establish in some necessary truth, or press to some necessary duty; and hence what in the forementioned passages is spoken to or of the Body of Christ, and the several Members of that Body, only concerns such persons, and is of special use to the promotion of the design aimed at in them; but that is no Argument, that

Infants,

Infants, to whom these things agree not, and who are not concerned as such in them, nor are capable of improving them to the end intended, were not of that Body, and consequently not admitted into it by Baptism, especially when the mind of Christ is fully revealed in other places as to that matter.

Object. 2. But the main and principal Objection, and indeed which hath any considerable appearance of weight in it, is that raised from *Mat. 28. 19.* compared with *Mark 16. 15, 16.* where the institution of Baptism, as is supposed by many, a Commission authorizing and requiring the administration of it among the Gentiles, as is granted by all is recorded. Now say our Opposers, Infant baptism cannot be according to the will of Christ, in as much as it agrees not with the institution of Baptism: the institution warrants the teaching and baptizing the Nations, that is, say the Objectors, such of the Nations as are taught, and by teaching made Disciples, but here is not a word concerning the Baptism of Infants. Now say they, certainly had it been the will of Christ that Infants should have been baptized, he would have so expressed the institution, as that his mind should have been plainly and clearly held forth therein, touching this matter; but here not being the least intimation that it is his will that they should be baptized; therefore their Baptism cannot rationally be judged to be according to his will.

Answer.

Ans^r. I shall not debate the Question, whether this of *Matthem* be, or may be, fitly called the, or an institution of Baptism, either absolutely, or unto us Gentiles, though let me say, it seems something strange to me, how it comes to bear the denomination of the institution of Baptism, seeing Baptism was in use long before this Command was given out, and certainly the Administrators of it would not act without an institution, neither do I think it can properly be called the institution of Baptism to us Gentiles. I doubt not, but this was only a Commission given out by Christ to his Apostles, and in them to all the Ministers of the Gospel, authorizing and enjoining them to administer those two Ordinances, of preaching the Gospel and Baptism, afore instituted, in such an extensive way, as is here expressed in the administration of which Ordinances the Administrators were and are to be regulated, not only by the letter of this Commission, but by all other directions Christ himself had, or yet should give them, relating to that their administration: But let that pass, call it the institution of Baptism, absolutely or respectively to us Gentiles, or a Commission, it is much at one as to my present purpose: As for the Objection as afore laid down, a brief answer may suffice: Two things, I suppose, are and will be granted by the generallity of, if not universally by all our Opposers.

First, That this Institution or Commission, call it which you will, doth not of it self necessarily exclude Infants from partaking of the Ordinance of Baptism. Se-

Secondly, That this institution or Commission doth warrant, yea, injoyn the application of Baptisme to all those our Lord Jesus Christ hath in his Word declared, that it is his will they should be baptized.

Now let but these two things be granted, and I have what I desire, having, as I judge, sufficiently evidenced, that Baptism was practised in primitive times by the Apostles themselves, and by others, by their allowance, direction and approbation, which whether I have done or no, I shall leave to the judgment of all judicious and impartial Readers, so that I might dismiss this Objection, the framers of it granting what I contend for: but yet because I find this Objection so much insisted upon, and accounted, by those of the ablest parts among our Opposers, to be the main and principal Objection, to oppose that practice of Infant-baptism we have hitherto pleaded for, I shall take it a little further into consideration, and see what strength it hath in it: and I find three things in a special manner urged, as giving strength to it.

First, That that Relative *αὐτοῖς, them*, in this Commission, must refer to Disciples, included in the Verb *μαθητεύσατε*, translated by our Translators teach, by others, Disciple, or make Disciples, and not to *ἔθνη, Nations*.

Secondly, That Infants being incapable of teaching, cannot be, nor in any propriety of speech said to be, Disciples.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, That this institution or Commission is to be understood exclusively, as excluding all from a rightful participation in that Ordinance of Baptism, who are not comprehended in it; and hence the sum of what is urged from this institution or Commission, against the practice of Infant-baptism, amounts to thus much, That the Subjects, appointed by Christ to be baptized, being Disciples, and Infants not being, nor rightly to be called Disciples, and all others besides Disciples being excluded from Baptism, by Christs appointing of them as the proper Subjects of that Ordinance; therefore Infants neither may nor ought to be baptized: And thus, I conceive, we see the utmost strength of this Objection.

For answer, I shall a little distinctly consider these three things giving strength to it.

And for the first, That ἀὐτοῖς, them, must refer not to ἐθνῶν, Nations, but to the Noun Disciples, included in the Verb μαθητεύσατε, to teach as its Antecedent or Substantive.

This I deny, and affirm on the contrary, that it ought to be referred to Nations, and not to Disciples, supposed to be included in that Verb, and that for two Reasons,

First, Because we ought to keep to the literal and plain Grammatical construction of a Text, where there is no necessary Reason to enforce a recession from it: Now according to the literal and plain Grammatical construction of these words, they must refer to Nations, whether

we translate that Verb, teach or make Disciples, saith Christ, teach all Nations, or make all Nations Disciples, baptizing them: Baptizing whom? Why, the Nations, who according to this Commission of Christ are to be taught, or made Disciples: And here is no necessary reason why we should recede from the most literal and plain Grammatical construction of the words; what reason is pretended shall be taken notice of by and by.

Secondly, Because it is doubtful, whether the Noun Disciples, supposed to be implied in the Verb μαθητεύσατε, were eyed by our Saviour in this Commission; what is affirmed in this matter, is affirmed mainly, if not only upon the conceit of a Criticism, concerning the signification of that word, viz. That it must needs signifie, to teach *cum effectu*, or to teach till the persons taught become Disciples: But now whether this Criticism were attended to by Christ, or whether he useth the word in that sense or no, is altogether uncertain: We see evidently Mark useth another word in setting down this Commission, *Go preach the Gospel to every Creature*, which, say our Opposers, answers this, *Go teach all Nations*; which if true, we may read the Commission thus, *Go preach the Gospel to every Creature, or to all Nations, baptizing them*; and then there can be no other antecedent, but the Creatures or Nations to be taught; and it is certain, the Gospel may be preached where no saving effect is produced by it, in those to whom it is preached; so that to

leave

leave the plain Grammatical and most literal construction of the words, and to ground a construction upon a supposed Criticism, whereas it is wholly uncertain, whether Christ eyed any such Criticism or no, as using that word in this Commission, is altogether unsafe, and therefore, I say, Nations, not Disciples, must be the antecedent to *αὐτοῖς*, them, enjoined by this Commission to be baptized: But some Reasons are urged to prove a necessity of taking Disciples, as included in that Verb, as the Antecedent to them:

The first is this, Because it is said that Christ (*viz.* by his Disciples) made Disciple and baptized, *John* 4. 1. therefore *μαθητευσατε* must be in this place understood of making Disciples also.

But to that I answer, That though Christ and his Disciples did by preaching make Disciples, yet all that they preached to were not made Disciples; they preached the Gospel to many who were not thereby made Disciples: hence it will not follow, that because Christ and his Disciples made some, yea, many Disciples, by preaching, therefore the Apostles, and other Ministers of the Gospel, were enjoined by this Commission to teach, *cum effectu*, in respect of all they were to teach: That they were and are to endeavour to teach so; as that the Word may be effectual, and Hearers may be made Disciples, is unquestionable; but that they should be enjoined so to preach, as that the uneffectualness of their Doctrine should be their sin, as it seems to be, in case Christ eyed that Criticism, can be

no way inferred from this success vouchsafed to their Ministry, while exercised among the Jews.

But secondly, Though the Disciples did baptise the Disciples made by their preaching, yet it is not said, they baptised only Disciples; that Disciples are to be baptized, suppose their case be the same with those there mentioned, is unquestionable; but that they only are to be baptized, is not in the least intimated: So that from this expression in *John*, it cannot with any shew of reason be concluded, that Christ had an eye to that aforementioned Criticism, in that word used by him in this Commission; nor if he had, that yet Disciples must needs be the Antecedent to them; the words may be as well read, Disciple all Nations, or make all Nations Disciples, baptizing them, and yet Nations, not Disciples, be the Antecedent to them.

Secondly, Another Reason to enforce the sense pleaded for by our Opposers, is this, because that sense seems best to agree with the words of *Mark*, *Mark* 16. 15, 16. where this Commission is thus exprest, *Go preach the Gospel to every Creature*; which, say our Opposers, answers this phrase, *Go teach all Nations*; *he that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved*, which answers, say they, *baptizing them*: hence they infer, that the Subjects of Baptism are Disciples, and these Disciples must be Believers.

But to that I answer, That there is no necessity of our so interpreting the one Evangelist by the other; we may, conjoyning both together

conceive

conceive the whole Commission, as thus given out by Christ; *Go ye therefore, teach all Nations, baptizing them; I say, Go preach the Gospel to every Creature; He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved, he that believeth not shall be damned:* And then as in these words recorded by *Mark*, *Preach the Gospel to every Creature*, Christ explained himself, as to the extensiveness of his meaning, in that phrase, *All Nations*, used by *Matthew*: So in the latter clause, *He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved; he that believeth not, shall be damned:* Christ informs them what the issue of their discharge of their Commission should be, in regard of the Nations to be taught, or Creatures, to whom the Gospel should be preached by them, those that should believe, and be baptized, should be saved, but those that believed not, however they might be baptized, yet they should be damned; which must needs, according to the unanimous consent of our Opposers, be understood of the adult; whence it will follow, that *Mark* speaks not at all of the Subjects of Baptism, but of the issue of the Apostles discharging their whole Commission, both in respect of preaching and baptizing, in respect of those towards whom they should discharge it, in case they should receive the Gospel preached, or through the preaching of the Gospel should believe, and were baptized, then they should be saved; but though they had the Gospel never so faithfully preached to them, yea, though they might so far imbrace it, as to submit to Baptism, yet unless

they believe, they should, notwithstanding that, be damned.

Thirdly, It is yet further urged, that in case *avres*, them, did refer unto *evn*, Nations, without any limitation, then this Commission would warrant the baptism of any Person or Nation in the world, whether taught or no, which it is rightly said, we our selves acknowledge ought not to be.

To this the answer is at hand, 'Tis true, it would do so in case there were no other directions in any other part of the Scriptures, for the Ministers of the Gospel to regulate themselves by in the discharge of this Commission; but this supposed evil consequence is sufficiently obviated in other places of Scripture, where the right Subjects of Baptism are sufficiently declared, *viz.* grown persons, in case they were not afore baptized upon their faith and repentance, and with them their Infant-seed; and this, I conceive, is the very design of Christ in this Commission, to authorize, yea, enjoin the preaching of the Gospel, and administration of Baptism to the whole world, by persons duly called to administer Gospel Ordinances unto men, yet so as to regulate themselves, in respect of both the one and the other, by such directions and limitations as himself had or should give, in relation to a due administration of both Ordinances; and that the Disciples and Ministers of the Gospel were and are to regulate themselves in the dispensing the Gospel unto men, as well in the administration of Baptism, by other Rules

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afore or after given by Christ, is sufficiently evident throughout the new Testament ; so that notwithstanding what it urged to the contrary. I conceive, it is fully evident, that *them* in this Commission, specifying the Subjects of Baptism, refers to Nations, not to Disciples, as its Antecedent.

Now having discovered the uncertainty, yea, falsity of this first Principle asserted, and laid as a foundation to the Objection proposed, the Objection is so far enervated, as that little need be added to the other two things, from which, in conjunction with this, it receives the whole of what strength it hath.

And therefore secondly, as to what is asserted in the second place, *viz.* That Infants neither are, nor can in propriety of speech be called Disciples, it concerns not me ; it is enough, as to my present purpose, that they may be comprehended under that phrase, *All Nations* ; I shall therefore only say, that I cannot but conceive, that will men judge impartially, suppose we should grant, that *them* in this Commission of Christ doth refer to Disciples, and not to Nations, and consequently that Disciples are the proper Subjects of Baptism ; yet they must acknowledge, that what hath been said by others to prove, that Infants may and ought, according to Scripture account, be numbred among the Disciples of Christ, renders this Objection wholly insufficient to counterballance the evidence produced from other Scriptures, for the establishment of the practice now pleaded

pleaded for, which is all at present I contend for.

And therefore thirdly, As for that Assertion, That this Institution or Commission is to be understood exclusively, and consequently, that none are to be baptized, but such whose baptism is in express terms warranted by it. I shall only say it is true, we ought so to understand it, in case we had no other Scriptures for our direction in the administration of Baptism, but take this Commission or Institution absolutely in it self, and the not including Infants in it, is not an excluding of them out of it. We see here Christ speaks immediately and directly to his Disciples, *Go ye therefore, &c.* none besides them are expressly included in it, and shall we say therefore that this Commission only concerned them? Surely no, it is a Commission for all that at that time, or in after Ages, should be called forth by Christ to minister in the Gospel; so it will not follow, suppose Disciples be the Antecedent to them, that therefore none else are to be baptized: As for what Instances are brought of Commands, express only positively, & yet interpreted by all Interpreters exclusively, as 1 Cor. ii. 28. and the like, the Reason is, because no other Scriptures allow any others, but such there spoken of, to partake of that Ordinance there spoken of, otherwise the bare commanding persons to examine themselves, in order to their due receiving of that Ordinance, doth not of it self exclude all others from it, that do not, or cannot examine themselves; so that I say, the Institution

tion or Commission, as abstractedly taken, doth not exclude all from the participation of this Ordinance of Baptism, who are not in express terms comprehended in it, which is all that I contend for, and as I have said, I suppose will be granted on all hands; so that should we grant, that *them* is to be referred to Disciples, included in that Verb, and that Infants are not Scripture Disciples, neither of which, notwithstanding all that is said by our Opposers, is granted, our Proposition may stand firm, for though Infants are not expressly included in the Commission, yet they are not excluded out of it, therefore their Baptism must stand or fall by the evidence of other Scriptures, and we having sufficient evidence from other Scriptures, that it is the will of Christ that they should be baptized, their not being expressly mentioned in the Commission, ought to be no Remora in the way of our thankful embracement of what light he hath elsewhere given of his mind and will in this matter.

Object. 3. There is an Objection or Argument, which some seem to conceive to have a very great strength in it, yea, to be unanswerable, which is carried on gradually to this issue, say the Framers of it, Seeing there is no express Command requiring the Baptism of Infants, the practice must needs be deduced only in a consequential way from the Scriptures: Now to prove that it cannot be rightly and duly deduced from any Scripture in a consequential way, so as that
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the omission of it should be a sin in the Parents, (and their sin it must be if it be a sin at all) against any Law of Christ, it is thus argued ;

If the omission or neglect of the Baptism of Infants were a sin chargeable upon their Parents, as being a transgression of some Divine Law, then some one or other, at one time or other would in Scripture have been commended for the practice of it, or blamed for the neglect of it : But no one, at any time whatsoever, is in Scripture either commended for the practice of it, or blamed for the neglect of it ; Therefore the omission of it cannot be a sin chargeable upon the Parents, as a breach of some divine Law.

Which Argument laid down catagorically must run thus.

Whatever practice is consequentially deduced from Scripture, in case it be from Heaven, some one or other, at one time or other, hath been commended for the practice of it, or blamed for the neglect of it : But no one was ever commended for the practice of Infant-baptism, nor blamed for the neglect of it ; Therefore it cannot be from Heaven, but must needs be of men.

And for the proof of the Major Proposition, several Instances are produced of Duties consequentially drawn, in respect of which we find, that some one or other ; at some time or other, hath been commended for the practice of them, or blamed for the neglect of them : thus, if I mistake not, that action of *Phinehas*, in slaying *Zimri*

Zimri and *Cosbi*, recorded *Numb.* 25. 6, 7, 8. is produced as one Instance, and variety of other Instances are reckoned up.

Ans^w. In answer to this Objection, or Argument, I shall say in general, that were it not for the high conceit some have of it, and that the sudden proposal of it, especially in the heat of disputation, when the mind, variously distracted cannot alwayes suddenly recal it self to a due weighing of what is proposed, may for a little while seem to puzzle such, who yet upon a little serious review of it will soon discern the extream vanity of it, I should wholly pass it by, as not thinking it worthy an answer, the weakness of it so evidently appearing to all considerate persons; but seeing it is supposed to be of such strength, for the opposing the practice I have hitherto pleaded for, I have judged it meet, to take it into consideration, and as previous to a direct Answer to it, I shall premise these two Questions.

First, Whether it be necessary, for the determining whether any controverted practice be from Heaven or of Men, that this commendation or discommendation, of persons practising or neglecting of it, should be expressly, or in plain words, declared in Scripture? or whether it be not sufficient, that they themselves may be consequentially, and by way of Argument, drawn and deduced from Scripture.

Secondly, Whether it be necessary that this commendation or discommendation, pleaded to,

be so necessary for the end mentioned, must be contained in some Scripture distinct from those the practice controverted is deduced from, or whether it may not be sufficient that they are contained in some Scriptures, which yet may be urged to give countenance to the practice under debate? And let the Framers of this Argument answer to these Questions, as they conceive most conducing to the end designed in it.

These two Questions being premised, let us come more directly to the Answer; and it may be answered several wayes, according to the Answer our Opposers shall give to the foregoing Questions.

First, Suppose it shall be said, That it is sufficient to determine any controverted practice to be from Heaven, in case it can be consequentially, or rationally deduced from any Scripture whatsoever, whether urged to give countenance to the practice controverted or no, That some one or other, at one time or another, hath been commended for the practice of it, or blamed for the neglect of it: Then I shall answer these two things.

First, I deny the Minor Proposition, and say, that we have Instances of persons commended for the practice of Infant-baptism, take these Instances, of *Lydia*, the Gaoler, and others.

But it is replied, It doth not appear that they had any Infants baptized, and therefore *Luke's* telling us, that they and their Households were baptized, cannot be interpreted as a commendation

tion to them for practising of Infant-baptisme.

But to that I answer, *Lis sub judice est*, we judge they had, our Opposers judge they had not: And who shall be Judge in this case? Surely neither we nor our Opposers, being both parties in the case controverted. And therefore,

Secondly, I say, That this Argument leaves the Controversie as it found it, and is of no use at all for the end designed in it; Its design is to prove, that the practice of Infant-baptism is not from Heaven, but of men, and it leaves it as doubtful, whether it be from Heaven or of men, as it was before; for notwithstanding such commendations or discommendations may be produced the way allowed in this Answer, yet the practice will be doubtful, and the Reason is evident, because it may be doubted, whether these commendations or discommendations are rightly and duly deduced from Scripture or no. And therefore,

Secondly, I suppose the Objectors or Argumentators must needs say, That such a commendation or discommendation, as is required, must be declared and expressed in some plain and express Scripture, or the consequence be drawn so evidently, as amounts to a plain and express Scripture; but then how extreamly ridiculous the Argument is, will soon appear to every ordinary capacity; and the Major may be justly denied, and that for a fourfold Reason.

First,

First, It is evidently false, there are some practises consequentially drawn, owned, and practised by our Opposers, as well as by our selves, respective unto which no one Instance can be produced of any, either commended for the practice of them, or discommended for the neglect of them: That Instance of Womens receiving the Lords Supper is obvious, that practice is only warranted in a consequential way; for where is any express Command to warrant it? And let any such Instance, as agrees with the sense of the Oponent in the Major Proposition be produced of any Woman, that is in Scripture commended for the practice of it, or discommended for the neglect of it.

Secondly, This Argument involves the Authors of it in an absolute contradiction, considering what is and must rationally be granted by them, for the practice the Argument makes head against, must rationally be granted; to be controvertible, or a practice that rational men may differ in their judgments about, some conceiving it is from Heaven, others conceiving it is from Men. Now let it be carefully observed, that supposing there were any plain Scripture expressly declaring, that some one or other had been commended for the practice of it, or blamed for the neglect of it, how could it be controvertible among wise and rational men? Sure the producing of such a Scripture would put it out of all question, among those that will be guided by Scripture light; so that this Argument doth imply, either that a controvertible

ble practice may be so evidently declared in Scripture, as to admit of no controverſie about it, or elſe that there is no ſuch thing as a controvertible practice in *rerum natura*, which is an eaſie way of deciding all Controverſies; for as for duties plainly expreſt and declared in Scripture, no wiſe man will move a controverſie about them; and as for practiſes conſequentially drawn, the way is moſt obvious, to determine whether they are from Heaven or of men; if from Heaven, ſome one at one time or other would have been in Scripture either commended for the practice of them, or blamed for the neglect of them; if no ſuch commendation or diſcommendation be extant in Scripture, than they are infallibly of men: Now ſurely it may eaſily be found out, whether there be extant any ſuch commendation or diſcommendation, reſpective to any Religious practiſes whatſoever, ſo that were this Objection or Argument worthy of any notice to be taken of it, we ſhould ſoon have an end of all our Controverſies among all ſober Chriſtians. But

Thirdly, Suppose no practice could be inſtanced in beſides that in controverſie that is from Heaven, but hath received its attestation from God, one of the wayes mentioned in this Argument; and ſuppoſe the Framers of it were not involved by it, in ſuch a contradiction as afore declared, yet, I ſay, the proof is wholly inſufficient. For

First, The Inſtances produced for the proof of it are wholly impertinent, as to the thing to

be proved ; for observe it , what is that which ought to be proved, in case the Argument make any opposition against the practice pleaded for ? It is this , that all those practices that are deduced from Scripture only in a consequential way, and on that account are controverted among rational men, ought to have a Testimonial from God, of their being from him, in case they are so, by his either somewhere in Scripture commending some one or other for the practice of them, or blaming some one or other for the neglect of them ; if this be not proved , the practice of Infant-baptism , though deduced only in a consequential way, may be from Heaven, notwithstanding none have ever either been commended for the practice of it, or blamed for the neglect of it.

Now mark, what do these Instances produced prove only this , that some practices may be lawful , which yet are deduced only consequentially from Scripture , in as much as some have been commended for practising upon that ground, others have been blamed for the neglect of practising Duties so deduceable, *Et quid hoc ad rhombum* , what is that to the purpose ? the Instances, if pertinent to the purpose for which they are brought, should be of practices produced, as afore exprest, which Antecedent to a lawful practice of them, have received some such testimonial from God, of his approbation of them by the wayes mentioned.

Secondly, Suppose we should grant (which yet we by no means can do) that these Instances

were

were pertinent, yet who can say the enumeration is full and compleat, yea, it is evident it is vastly deficient, for notwithstanding we find such and such practises owned to be from God, by the commendation he hath given to some one or other for the practising of them, or by the blame he hath laid upon others for the neglect of them. Yet who can say, but that some duties and practises might have been duly deduced in a consequential way, from some discovery that God had afore made of his will, in respect of which there is no one Instance throughout the whole Scripture, of any one practising of them, nor mention made of any ones neglect of them? Shall we think, that no more duties were deducable from the feveral Laws, whether Moral or Ceremonial, or Judicial, then some have been commended for the practice of, or others have been blamed for the neglect of? It would be most irrational to suppose it. For any to infer, that because such and such have been commended for the practice of such duties, which they have consequentially drawn from some antecedent discoveries of the will of God, or others have been blamed for the neglect of others that might have been consequentially drawn, therefore whatever practice is duly inferred, by consequence would have its attestation from God one of those wayes, in case it were indeed from him, is as unreasonable an Inference, as well can be drawn by any man that hath the use of his own Reason.

Fourthly, I answer, That the Instances mentioned for the proof of the Major Proposition; are so far from proving that, the confirmation of which is designed by them, that they do indeed prove the quite contrary: The thing to be proved is this, That all such practises as are deduced consequentially from Scripture, in case they be from Heaven, as the pleaders for them pretend them to be, would be declared so to be by some commendation recorded in Scripture, that God at one time or other had given to some one or other for practising of them, or by some reproof, that he at one time or other had given for the neglect of them.

Now for the proof of this, several Instances are brought of practises deduceable only in a consequential way, in regard of which, we read how God hath commended some for the practice of them, and blamed others for the neglect of them.

Now let these Instances be well weighed, and we shall see they prove the quite contrary to that, the confirmation whereof they are designed unto, namely, That a practice that is only consequentially drawn from Scripture, may be lawful, yea, a duty, though none have antecedently been ever commended by God for the practice of it, or blamed for the neglect of it. Take that action of *Phinehas* in slaying *Zimri* and *Cosbi*, and suppose *Phinehas* to have deduced his duty in that particular only by way of consequence, from some antecedent discovery of the will of God: Now it is evident, that *Phinehas* doth

doth perform that duty, and was accepted of God in it, as only so consequentially deduced, without any approbation of it from God, either of the wayes before mentioned, was there any one at any time, either commended for killing *Zimri* and *Cosbi*, or for killing any others upon the like occasion, and yet we see *Phinehas* only deducing his duty in a consequential way, is faithful in it, and is accepted and rewarded of God; and the like will be found true of all other Instances of the like nature, produced for the same end and purpose: And thus suppose the practice of Infant-baptism were only deduced in a consequential way, and no one were ever commended for the practise of it, nor any ever blamed for the neglect of it, yet it may be safely practised, and none need, upon the account of the want of such Instances as is required, question their acceptation with God; we have the Instance of *Phinehas*, and other of a like nature, for our warrant and encouragement, because Saints have formerly been accepted, and highly rewarded for the doing of that their duty, which they could only infer in a consequential way, and if we, following of them, do indeed rightly infer our duty, and faithfully practise it, we shall be alike accepted of God, and not miss of our reward. From all that hath been said, we may see the unreasonableness of this Argument, and were it not for the Reasons aforementioned, I should have judged it rather worthy of contempt than a serious answer.

These Objections being answered, I conceive, I may with safety and security to the Truth pleaded for, come to a close, only whereas it is by *Antipædobaptists* usually queried, What can we rationally suppose can be the end of our Lord Jesus Christ, in appointing the application of Baptism to Infants while in their infancy? Or what good can accrew unto them by it, seeing it is certain they understand not what is done unto them, neither are they capable of making any present improvement of it?

I judge it necessary to offer something for their satisfaction, wherein yet I shall, on the account elsewhere mentioned, be very brief, and all that I shall say at present is this, That take Baptism, as the Sign, Token, or Seal of the Covenant, as it ought to be taken, and answerably applyed upon that ground, viz. their interest in the Covenant and Promises thereof, and as serving to, and performing those various uses and ends, with reference to which a Sign or Token in the general is annexed to the Covenant: And so I say, that as there were mighty ends of our Lord Jesus, his appointing the application of it to the Infant-seed of believing Parents, so exceeding much good doth and, were it rightly and duly improved by them, as they grew up to a capacity inabling them thereunto, vastly more would accrew unto them thereby.

I shall give this one Instance, and that is Its useful subservency to their preservation in that Covenant-state, into which they, as the Seeds,

Seed of such Parents, were afore admitted, and consequently to the injoyment of all the good benefits and blessings of the Covenant, and the useful subservency Baptism hath to this great end lyes in this, that thereby the Seed of Believers are anticipated, in their choice of what God they will serve, and what way they will walk in.

For the clearing up of this let it be observed, that youth is ordinarily mans chusing time, hence whereas we read in *Eccles. 12. 1. Remember thy Creator in the dayes of thy youth. Arius Montanus* in his *Interlineal* reads, *In diebus electionum tuarum*, in the dayes of thy chusing; the word comes from a Root, which properly signifies, *elegit, selegit*, hence the Substantive, by a Metaphor, is used to signifie a Youth or a young Man, either because of the fitness of youth for service, upon which account such are usually chosen out for special service, whence is that frequent phrase in Scripture, of *chosen men*, speaking of Souldiers, or men appointed for war, or else because youth is the special time of mans choice; Man so soon as capable of reflecting upon himself, and perceiving his own indigency, as to that happiness his natural make and constitution yenders him capable of, is forc'd to look out and cast about him, for the gaining from without such a supply as may compensate that indigency he finds himself to lye under, and no sooner doth man begin to look abroad into the world, but as variety of objects, so variety of wayes and courses of life occur to his mind and thoughts,

from whence he may conceive a hope of furnishing himself with those supplies; and as in the general, a Deity, with the wayes and means of his worship and service, and the world, with the various wayes and means of gaining and injoying that, become Competitors in his choice: So seeing to all Nations, nor to all people in each Nation, there is not one and the same God, nor one and the same way of worshipping & serving him, & seeing there are variety of particular Objects in the world, & various ways and means of gaining and injoying this or that particular Object, hence he hath variety of choice, when in the general he is come to a resolution with himself, whether it shall be by the worship and service of a Deity, or by the gaining and injoying the world, he will attempt his own happiness, and according as the mind is swayed towards, at least so as to fix upon this or that object, or this or that way or course, such usually at least frequently, is the man throughout his whole life and conversation, take it of the things of the world in general, as coming in competition with a Deity, with the way and means of his worship and service, if the mind be swayed towards the world, so as to fix upon that, the man usually lives an irreligious life, and prosecutes the world and the things of that throughout his whole life; but now if it please the Lord to open the eyes, and shew the Soul himself, and effectually draw and incline the mind to himself and his wayes, with the benefit and advantages of chusing, serving and worshipping

shipping him, it is unto God and his wayes of worship and service that the man applyes himself, as the only way to attain unto happines. So take it of any particular object in the world, or any particular way or course of life, according as the mind fixes at the first, so is the man throughout his whole life and conversation. Now, I say, 'tis in youth at least usually, that the mind of man pitches upon this or that object, this or that way or course, afterwards prosecuted, or after taken and walked in throughout the following part of his life; hence it is found, at least very frequently, as for those who enjoy the means of Grace in their youth, if they are not then wrought upon to close in with God in Christ his wayes and worship, as the only way to attain unto happines, they are seldom ever wrought upon.

Now here is an eminent expression of the goodness of God to his people, that as he hath extended his Covenant to their Seed, so he hath ordained the application of the Sign and Token of the Covenant unto their Seed (as well as to themselves, that he might thereby anticipate their choice, that when they come to look abroad into the world, they may find themselves afore well provided for in their interest in God, and find themselves preobliged to take God in Christ as their God and portion, and to walk in his wayes, they find themselves not left at liberty to chuse what God they please, or walk how or in what way themselves please, but they find themselves afore dedicated and given up to
God

God in Christ, as his people, and obliged and engaged by Baptism to cleave unto him, and to walk in his wayes, and supposing them by those upon whom that concern is incumbent, instructed in this Obligation they are prevented by, and what is the danger of breaking of it, their baptism hath a most useful subserviency to the preservation of their Covenant-state, and consequently their injoyment of all the good, blessings and benefits of the Covenant. And let me add thus much more, That Baptism having a blessing annexed to the administration of it, is one of those means, supposing the party baptized come to make a due improvement of it, that God doth make use of effectually to incline the heart of the Seed of Believers, to a right and willing compliance with that Obligation put upon them by it; and by this little hint we may easily perceive, that God had weighty ends in injoyning the application of Baptism, the present Token of the Covenant, as well as Circumcision of old, the then Token of the Covenant to the Infant-seed of his People; and that the application of it is of admirable use and benefit unto them, when duly improved by them; and certainly then it must needs be not only highly injurious to the Seed of believing Parents, to withhold the Token of the Covenant from them, they being thereby deprived of a special means, subservient to their preservation, in their Covenant-state and injoyment of all the good of the Covenant, but exceeding prejudicial to the interest of Christ in the world, the Tabernacle
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of *David*, as we have before proved, is raised up, and upheld among the Gentiles, by Gods taking Families into Covenant with himself : Now to neglect a special means that God hath appointed, subservient to the preservation of these Families in their Covenant-state, must needs directly tend to the ruine and overthrow of the interest and Kingdom of Christ in the world : But not to enlarge upon this at present.

From this little that hath been said we may easily perceive, that the application of Baptism to the Infant seed of Believers, is no such vain or useless thing, as it is by too many supposed.

I have only a few more words to add, as a *Coronis* to the whole foregoing Discourse, and I have done.

That it is the will of our Lord Christ, that the Infant-seed of one or both believing Parents should be baptized, is to me, upon the grounds afore laid down, unquestionable ; how far it will be so to others I cannot say ; only this I know, that whatever light is held forth by man, for the discovery of the mind and will of Christ, relating to any practice, yet unless he, who is the great Prophet of his Church, shall vouchsafe to open the eyes of the mind, and prevail upon the heart to imbrace and submit unto that light held forth, the holding of it forth will be wholly insignificant, as to any benefit accreuing therefrom unto men. Man may, according to what assistance is vouchsafed from Christ, hold forth light discovering the way he would have his People walk in, but 'tis wholly in his own power,

power, whose Prerogative it is to lead into all Truth, to enlighten the mind, and cause the Soul to walk in that way : Leaving therefore the whole of what hath been said in his hand , and to his blessing , I shall wind up all with a three-fold advice, according to the various, sentiments of men about , and their various concerns in the practice I have contended for.

First, As for such who have been , and notwithstanding what is here offered, or hath been by others, shall still remain to be so far dissatisfied about the practice we plead for, as wholly to omit it, and walk in that way that lyes in a direct opposition thereunto, let me advise, and in the Spirit of meekness earnestly beseech them to carry it, under their present perswasions, and practise with a holy fear and trembling. The grounds held forth in the foregoing Treatise, and by several others, pleading for the same Truth, seem so full and clear, yea, to me so convincing,, that I can hardly fear being accounted over confident; though I take it for granted, that the most confident and resolved of our Opposers must needs acknowledge, that our doctrine and practice of Infant baptism stands upon the same level of probability, if the advantage be not on our side , that the opposite Doctrine and practise doth , and that upon supposition of our Doctrine and practice being found agreeable to the mind and will of Christ, the opposite Doctrine and practice must needs be highly prejudicial to the comfort of believing Parents, the good of their Seed , and which is
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most of all, eo the supportation and propagation of the interest and Kingdom of Christ in the world. And let me add, that when the consequences of refusing or claiming a priviledge are of an even size, the refusing such a priviledge, suppose it be indeed granted, and ought to be accepted of, is a greater sin, and more displeasing unto God, than the claiming and appropriating of it, supposing it be not granted, nor that claim really warranted by Scripture is, as is evident to every considerate person: we see how much God was offended at *Abaz* his refusing a Sign when offered to him; how much God was displeased with *Moses* for neglecting to circumcise his Child: therefore, I say, walk with a holy fear and trembling, lest as some will meet with a *Who required this at your hand?* so you shall meet with a *How durst thou refuse this priviledge at my hand?*

Secondly, As for such whose judgment and practice agree with, and answerably are confirmed by the foregoing Discourse, especially such to whom God hath vouchsafed that blessing of Children, let me advise, and importunately intreat them, yea, in the Name of our Lord Christ command them, that they satisfie not themselves in the bare discharge of their duty, in regard of the application of Baptism to their Seed in their infancy; know that your work is not done when you have brought yours within the verge or under the bond of the Covenant; you will find in the foregoing Papers, that your Seeds inheriting the good which, in
common

common with you, they are Heirs unto, depends much upon your faithful and wise discharge of your duty towards them, as growing up to years of maturity : *Abraham* must command his Household that they keep the way of the Lord, and that to this end, that God might bring upon him the good promised, with reference to his, There is hardly any thing a greater discouragement to Ministers, in pleading for and administering Infant-baptism, than the great neglect of Parents towards their Children, when baptized and grown up to a capacity of understanding and improving their Baptism, afore administered to them ; therefore seeing you lay claim to *Abraham's* Blessing, as his Children, walk in *Abraham's* steps, both in respect of your own personal faith and holiness, and also in instructing and commanding your Children, that they may keep the way of the Lord : In particular, let them know their privilege . and the danger of forfeiting of it, by breaking that Obligation put upon them by Baptism.

Thirdly and lastly, As for such who are the Seed of believing Parents, and who by Baptism have been dedicated and given up unto God in Christ, and incorporated into his mystical Body, as visible : Let me advise, perswade and charge them, that they lay no more weight upon their Baptism, in relation to their eternal happiness, than the nature of the Ordinance, and the end of Christ in appointing the application of it, will warrant. Baptism, abstractly taken, infallibly secures Salvation to none ; neither can

Baptism

Baptism of it self be laid as a sure ground to bottom a plea for Salvation upon; *He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not, however baptized, shall be damned,* is one of those unalterable Decrees laid up in the Records of Heaven: In respect of which we may say, as *Job* in another case of God, *He is of one mind, and who shall, that is, none shall, turn him,* *Job 23. 13.* Your abiding in and injoying the benefits of the Covenant, into which, as the Seed of such Parents, you were admitted in your infancy, undispensably requires your personal faith and obedience; therefore be faithful in the discharge of your duty, and in so doing you may, upon sure grounds, apply and improve your Baptism, as Gods Seal, infallibly securing your injoyment of the good promised.

F I N I S.





William Rand

William Rand







